AFTER SCHOOL NIGHTMARE

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AFTER SCHOOL NIGHTMARE

THIS DREAM DRAWS BLOOD...

The final class bell has begun to ring! Decisions are made, secrets revealed, and the truth behind the dreams is brought to light. Do not miss the exciting last volume of this profound and poignant series.

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RATED OT OLDER TEEN 16+

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AFTER SCHOOL NIGHTMARE

Our Story So Far

Mashiro Ichijo is a student whose body is half female, and half male. One day, he's called down to a secret infirmary to participate in a "special class" he needs to graduate. He learns from another student, Kureha, that each student takes on their true form in this class. When each student reaches their personal goal, their most heart-felt dream will come true. Mashiro decides to use this class to become a true male.

But when another dreamer – a merciless knight – exposes his body's secret and Kureha's tragic past, Mashiro vows to protect the weaker dreamers.

Who is the person behind the knight? While trying to find out, Mashiro is accosted and kissed by Sou, a student he doesn't get along with. For some reason, Sou thinks Mashiro's a girl and confesses his love to him. Could Sou be the knight? Mashiro becomes obsessed with Sou, finally blurting out that he loves him, too, only to have Sou reveal that he's only using Mashiro to sever his twisted ties from his sister, Ai.

In the dream class, Sou finally makes up his mind as to how he feels about Ai, but Mashiro misinterprets this to mean that Sou didn't choose him. Mashiro falls into a deep depression, and when he awakens, something seems terribly wrong with the world he sees...

Participants in the Class
If you get chosen for the boy, you can graduate.
When your hearts take damage, the beads break. When all three breaks, you're eliminated.
When the students open this door, they graduate.
The Nurse

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GIRLS LIVE IN A WORLD OF LIES AND LUXURY.

"WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING" WOULD BE A GOOD ANALOGY.

THE SPAGHETTI'S REALLY GOOD TODAY!

YEAH, IT'S DELISH! AND THIS CAKE IS MY NEW BEST FRIEND! ♡

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OH! UH... SORRY.
ARE YOU OKAY?
YOU'VE BEEN REALLY WEIRD LATELY.
YEAH, I'M FINE...
I FELL ASLEEP LAST PERIOD...
...AND HAD THIS WICKED LONG DREAM.
I GUESS IT KIND OF MESSED WITH MY HEAD.
WHAT KIND OF DREAM?
WELL, I...I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER.
I THINK I WAS... HALF GUY...
Ha ha ha!
OH, THAT'S WILD!
I'D LOVE TO SEE THAT!

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YOU WANT IT, AI-CHAN?
OH, THIS? NAH, I'M FULL.
[redacted] ARE YOU GOING TO FINISH THAT?
I DON'T KNOW...I DON'T THINK IT WAS LIKE THAT...
TOTALLY! YOU'D HAVE TO BEAT 'EM OFF WITH A STICK!!
I BET A MALE MASHIRO-CHAN WOULD GET ALL THE GIRLS ♡
WHAT ...?
I WISH I COULD EAT MORE, BUT MY STOMACH DOESN'T HOLD THAT MUCH!
[redacted], YOU REALLY DON'T EAT ENOUGH FOR A GIRL YOUR HEIGHT.
I'LL JUST HAVE HALF, IF YOU DON'T MIND...
*. Don't wanna get too fat
YEAH? THANKS!
HUH? DID I MISS SOME-THING?
WE'RE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS. HOW CAN THIS BE...?
WHY CAN'T I REMEMBER HER NAME?
WHAT'S HER NAME?

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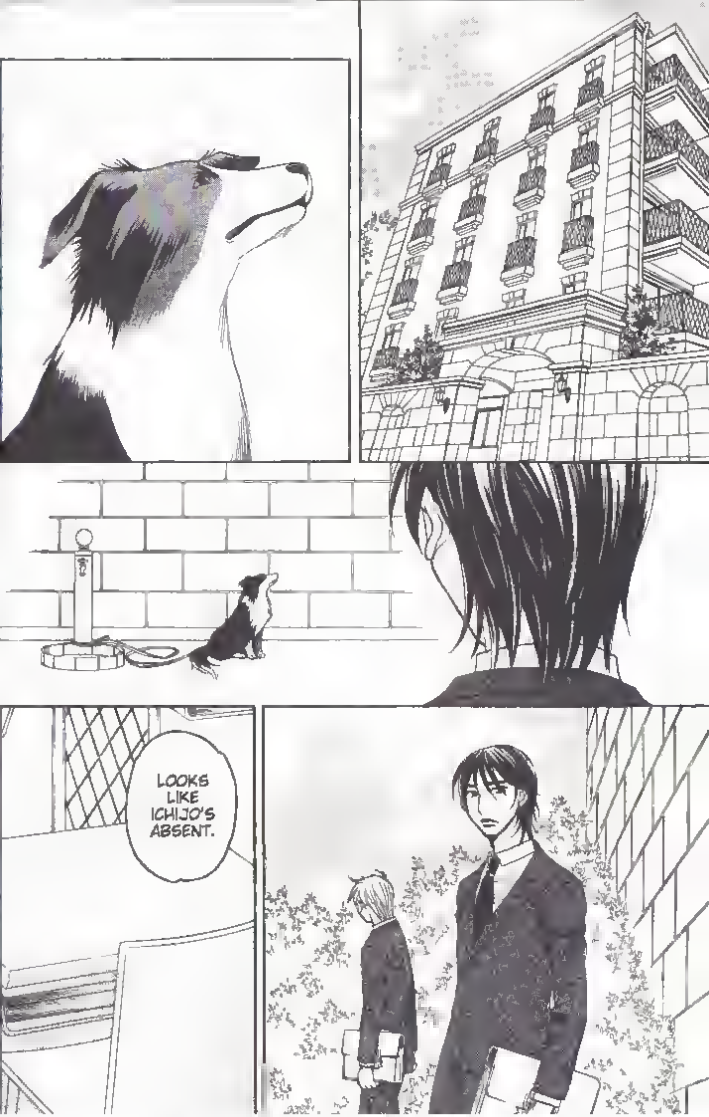

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OKAY, GUYS. SUBMISSIONS FOR THE CULTURAL FESTIVAL ARE DUE NEXT WEEK, SO...
YES, SIR.
REGARDLESS, I BELIEVE THE CLASS PRESIDENT HAS SOMETHING TO SAY.
EVERYTHING IS OVER HERE BY THE BLACKBOARD IF YOU NEED IT.
...IF ANYONE HAS ANY IDEAS, WRITE THEM DOWN AND PUT THEM IN THIS BOX
I DIDN'T SEE HIM THIS MORNING, EITHER.
I WAITED UP FOR HIM LAST NIGHT, BUT HE NEVER CAME.
WHAT!?
MASHIRO-KUN DIDN'T COME BACK TO THE DORM!?

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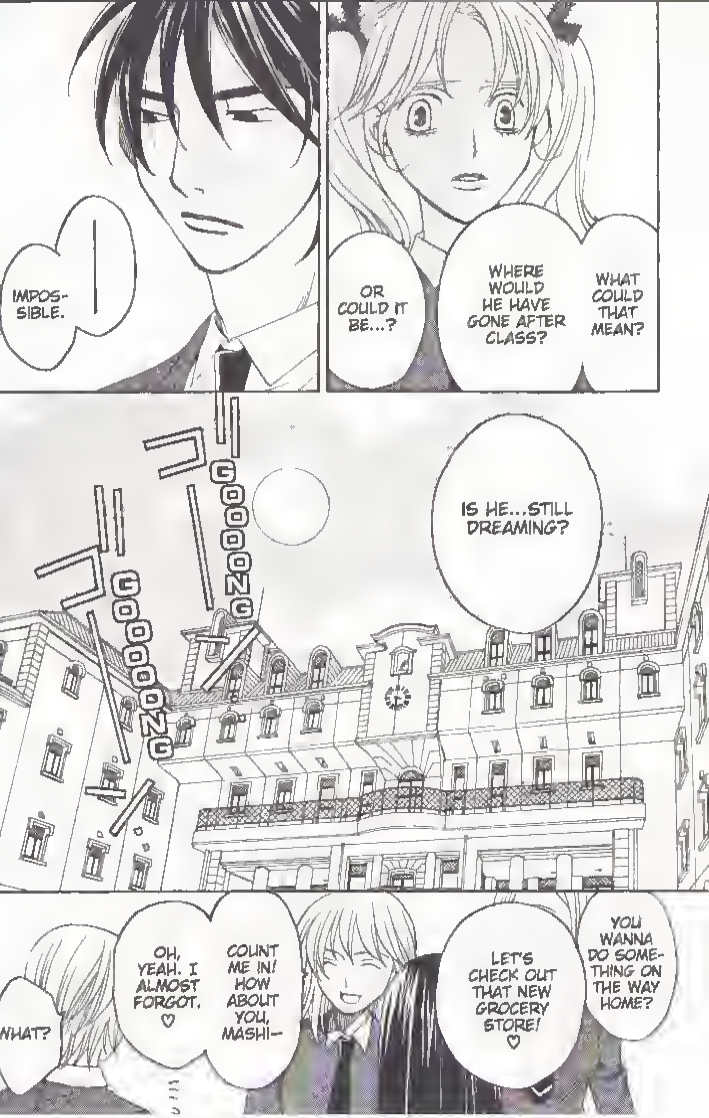
IMPOS-SIBLE.
OR COULD IT BE...?
WHERE WOULD HE HAVE GONE AFTER CLASS?
WHAT COULD THAT MEAN?
IS HE...STILL DREAMING?
COOOONG
COOOOONG
WHAT?
OH, YEAH. I ALMOST FORGOT. ♡
COUNT ME IN! HOW ABOUT YOU, MASHI--
LET'S CHECK OUT THAT NEW GROCERY STORE! ♡
YOU WANNA DO SOME-THING ON THE WAY HOME?

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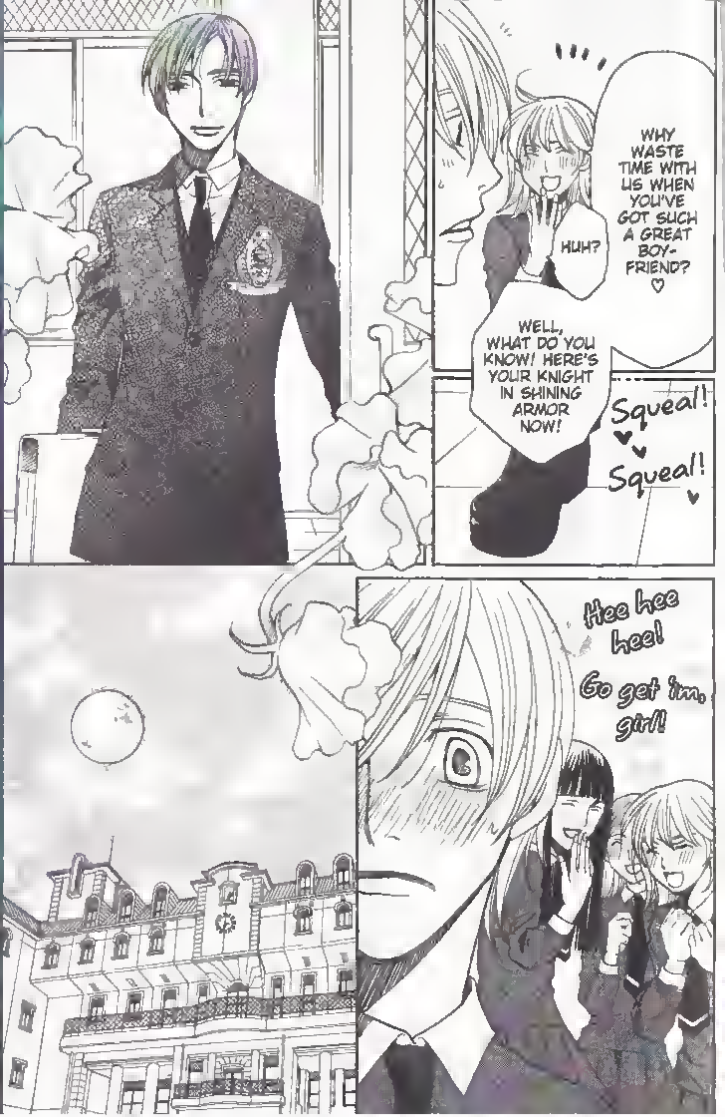
WHY WASTE TIME WITH US WHEN YOU'VE GOT SUCH A GREAT BOY-FRIEND? ♡
HUH?
WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW! HERE'S YOUR KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR NOW!
Squeal! ♥ ♥ Squeal! ♥
Hee hee hee!
Go get 'im, girl!

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Gasp!
BLUSH!
..SHE REALLY LIKES YOU.
SPEAKING OF WHICH, MY MOTHER SAID...
IF THAT'S TRUE, I'M FLATTERED.
AS IF!! THEY'RE ALWAYS GOING ON ABOUT HOW JEALOUS THEY ARE BECAUSE YOU'RE SO HANDSOME AND MATURE, SEMPAI.
THAT'S HOW THEY ARE. IT'S SCARY... THEY'RE PROBABLY MAKING FUN OF ME.
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
OH YEAH. I WENT TO SEMPAI'S HOUSE TO HANG OUT AND MET HIS MOTHER...
SHE THINKS YOU'RE VERY POLITE AND MATURE... "A SWEET PRINCESS," SHE SAID.
B... BUT I'M NOT...!
WHAT!?
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. I CAN'T REMEMBER HIS NAME...
SOMETHING SEMPAI...
SEM-PAI...?
WAIT A MINUTE...

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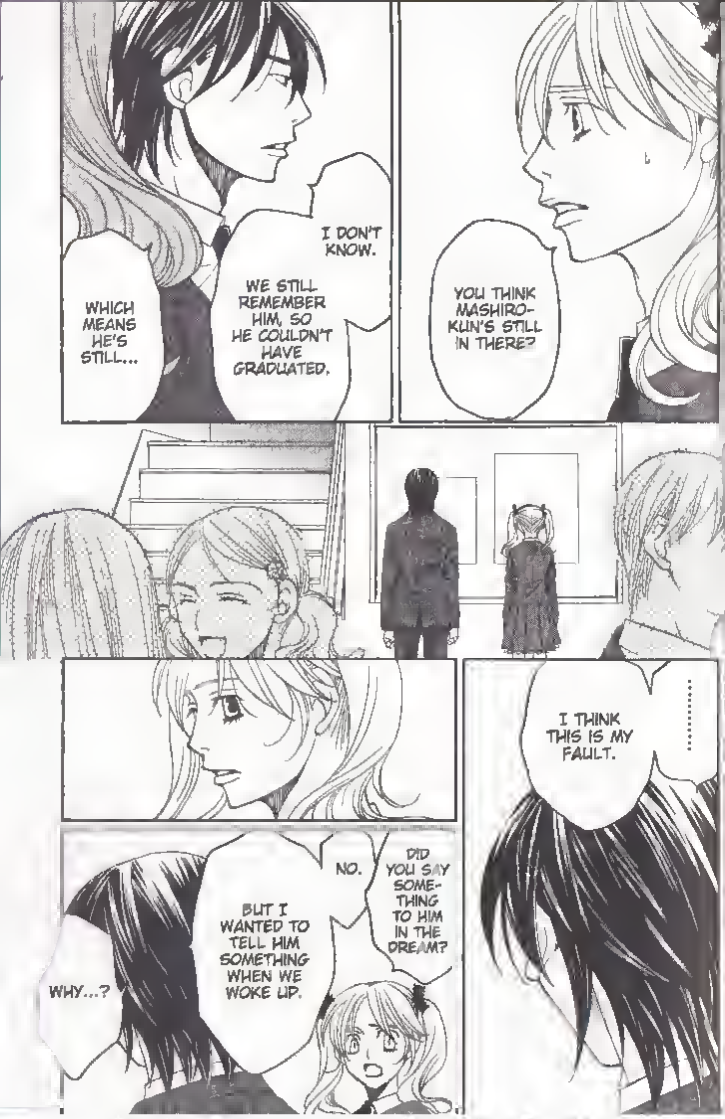
YOU THINK MASHIRO-KUN'S STILL IN THERE?
I DON'T KNOW.
WE STILL REMEMBER HIM, SO HE COULDN'T HAVE GRADUATED.
WHICH MEANS HE'S STILL...
I THINK THIS IS MY FAULT.
DID YOU SAY SOME-THING TO HIM IN THE DREAM?
NO.
BUT I WANTED TO TELL HIM SOMETHING WHEN WE WOKE UP.
WHY...?

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WHY WON'T HE COME BACK!?
KICK
...THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE, SO I'M SURE THERE'S SOME OTHER REASON.
THAT MIGHT BE PART OF IT, MIZUHASHI, BUT...
BLAMING YOURSELF AND JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS WON'T HELP..
AH, THERE YOU ARE!
KUREHA!?
TMP
TMP

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WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!
...ME?
WE WANT TO PUT ON A PLAY FOR THE CULTURAL FESTIVAL
WOULD YOU PLAY THE FEMALE LEAD, KUREHA? SHE'S A PRINCESS! ♡
THE BLACK ROSE PRINCESS!
WHAT KIND.. OF PRINCESS?
what a gothic title
Oh, boy.
THE BLACK ROSE PRINCESS IS PROPOSED TO BY TWELVE VAMPIRES, AND MAKES THEM RUN A GAUNTLET TO SEE WHICH IS MOST WORTHY. ♡
BUT WHEN SHE CHOOSES ONE, SHE'S TURNED INTO A TREE!
EVERYONE THINKS YOU'D LOOK AMAZING IN A GOTHIC-STYLE DRESS, SO THE WARDROBE DEPARTMENT SAID THEY'D HELP OUT!
OH, REALLY...
I wanted to hear that!
???
I've never heard that story
I SAID I'M NOT DOING IT!!
MIZUHASHI COURTING PRINCESS KUREHA WOULD LOOK SO PERFECT! THAT DOES IT! IT'S SETTLED!
I wanted to hear that!
NOT IN A MILLION YEARS!!
You mean I'm the first of many!?
WE NEED AS MANY GUYS AS WE CAN GET!
OH! AND YOU SHOULD PLAY THE FIRST VAMPIRE PRINCE, MIZUHASHI!

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NO MATTER HOW IMPORTANT HE IS TO US, IT'S ONLY TO US.
WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?
...WE HAVE A VERY PERSONAL BOND.
...AND TRIED SO HARD TO UNDERSTAND US...
...SINCE HE SHARED OUR PAIN...
BUT AT THE SAME TIME...

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You're something else!
OH, MIZUHASHI! YOU SAY THE SILLIEST THINGS WITHOUT EVEN THINKING!
"A personal bond"!? Give me a break!
I didn't think it was silly
MASHIRO-KUN WILL...
...COME HOME, RIGHT?

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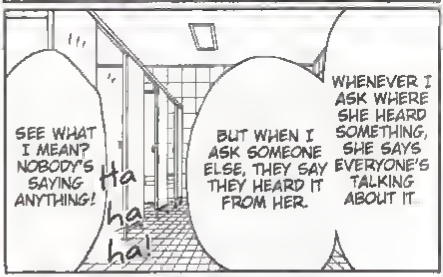
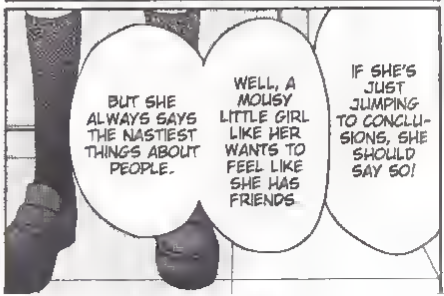
Extra Ash Talk

For those of you who wanted to hear more about the Black Rose Princess — the story of a princess and her vampire princes — step right up! My latest story is called "Black Rose Alice"!

SSSHH
SPLISH SPLASH
IT'S TOTALLY UNEXPECTED.
BUT THEY DO SEEM PRETTY CLOSE.
KUREHA AND MIZUHASHI SURE ARE TIGHT THESE DAYS.

WAIT, REALLY?
I SORTA THOUGHT SO, BUT I WASN'T SURE.
OH, THAT'S JUST EBISAWA-SAN AND HER BIG MOUTH AGAIN.
She's always making stuff up
I'M CONFUSED. I HEARD THEY WERE GOING OUT, BUT THEN THEY BROKE UP?


SEE WHAT I MEAN? NOBODY'S SAYING ANYTHING!
Ha ha ha!
BUT WHEN I ASK SOMEONE ELSE, THEY SAY THEY HEARD IT FROM HER.
WHENEVER I ASK WHERE SHE HEARD SOMETHING, SHE SAYS EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT IT


BUT SHE ALWAYS SAYS THE NASTIEST THINGS ABOUT PEOPLE.
WELL, A MOUSY LITTLE GIRL LIKE HER WANTS TO FEEL LIKE SHE HAS FRIENDS.
IF SHE'S JUST JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS, SHE SHOULD SAY SO!

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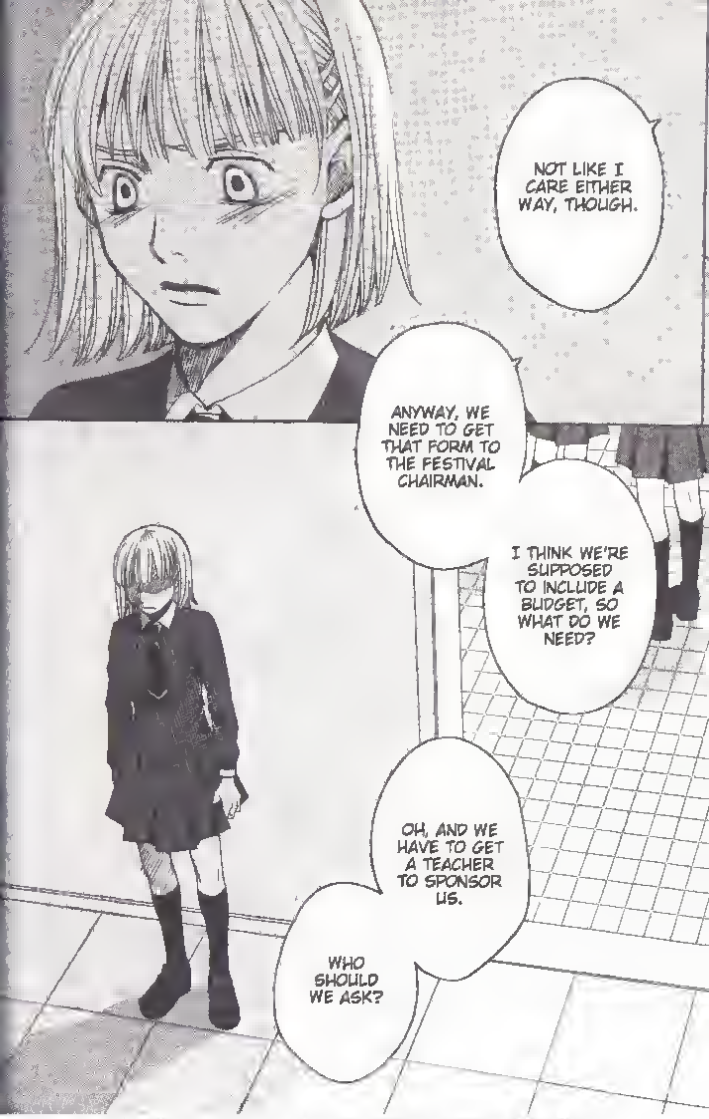
NOT LIKE I CARE EITHER WAY, THOUGH.
ANYWAY, WE NEED TO GET THAT FORM TO THE FESTIVAL CHAIRMAN.
I THINK WE'RE SUPPOSED TO INCLUDE A BUDGET, SO WHAT DO WE NEED?
OH, AND WE HAVE TO GET A TEACHER TO SPONSOR US.
WHO SHOULD WE ASK?

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WHAT!?
BESIDES, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO COME TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE WITH YOU. ♡
I KNOW IT HURT, BUT...
There's no need to pretend it never happened
WHAT KIND OF REACTION IS THAT?
SHH...
BE QUIET.
YOU'LL INTERRUPT OUR NEIGHBORS.

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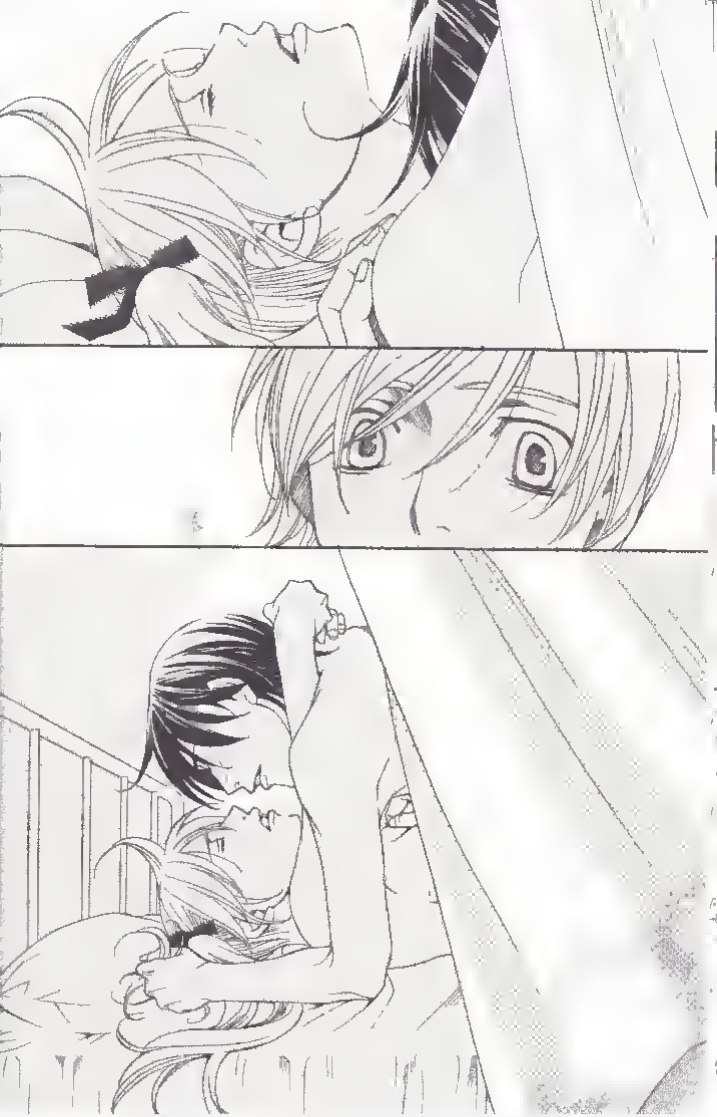

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I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG!
THIS IS ALL A DREAM! YOU'RE MAKING IT HAPPEN!
YOU THINK I'M DOING THIS?
YOU'RE THE ONE HAVING THIS DREAM, NOT ME.
SO TELL ME HOW DO YOU LIKE BEING A GIRL?
YOU HAVING FUN? YOU HAPPY YET?

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DO YOU THINK ALL THIS IS WORTH KILLING ME FOR?
STOP TALKING LIKE THAT!
I CAN ONLY ACCEPT WHAT I AM!
IT'S NOT A MATTER OF WHICH IS BETTER!
THAT'S NOT WHAT YOU USED TO THINK.
YOU SHOULD COME BACK TO ME.
THERE'S STILL TIME.
IT'S NOT TOO LATE.

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.....
YOU'RE REALLY IMPULSIVE, YOU KNOW THAT?
EVERYTHING IS SO SPUR OF THE MOMENT WITH YOU, SO RANDOM AND SUDDEN.
JUST FOR THE RECORD...
YOU ARE THE MOST SELFISH GIRL I'VE EVER MET.

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I'M SORRY TO RUSH THIS.
I KNOW I'M PROBABLY BEING TOO ROUGH.
I PROMISE I'LL BE NICER NEXT TIME...
...SO JUST BEAR WITH ME FOR NOW.
HUH?
IT'S YOUR FAULT FOR MAKING ME LIKE THIS.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA.
THIS PLACE IS SO DUSTY.
I DON'T MIND, THOUGH.
I KNOW IT HURTS...
...AND THAT HE'S NOT BEING THE LEAST BIT ROMANTIC.
AH ...!
I KNOW SOU'S NOT A GOOD GUY TO GET MIXED UP WITH.

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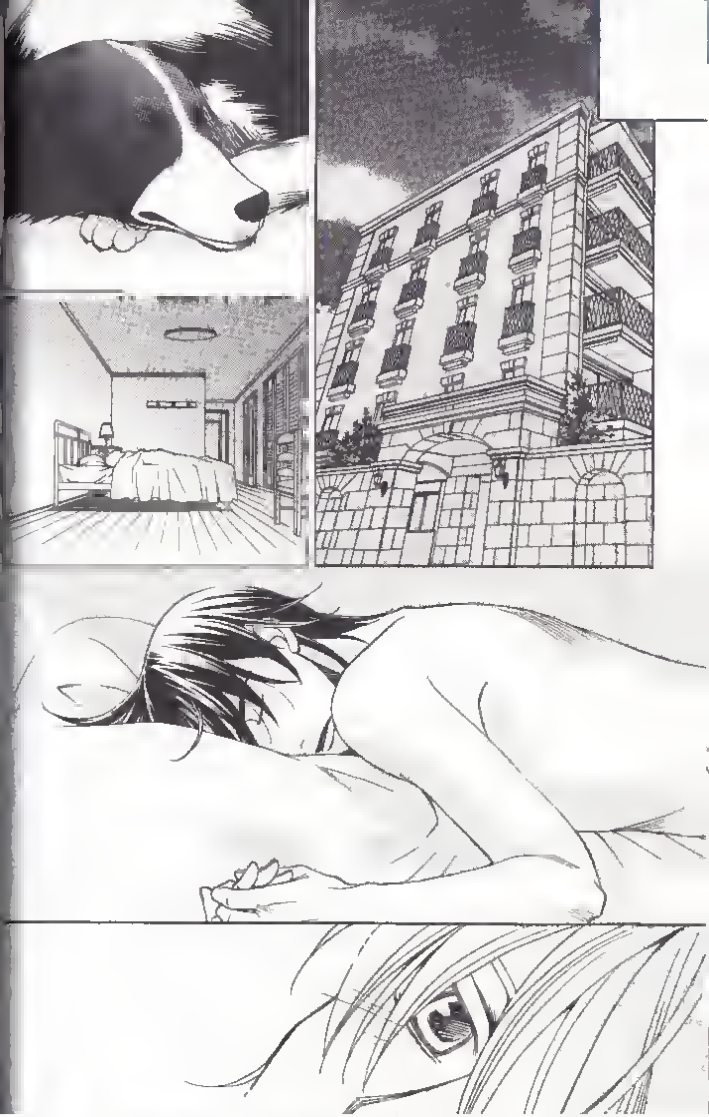

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I'M NOT ASLEEP WHAT'RE YOU STARING AT?
Dopp!
BLINK
You scared me!
YOU SHOULD BE...IT'S ALMOST DAWN.
NO, I DIDN'T MEAN ..
ARE YOU TELLING ME TO SHUT UP AND GO TO SLEEP?
WHAT IF I ONLY USED YOU TO FEEL LIKE A GIRL?
LISTEN.
BUT...
...HOW ARE YOU GOING TO USE ME NEXT TIME?
AND I'M GLAD THAT YOU CHOSE ME
I DON'T REALLY CARE I'M GLAD I COULD BE OF SOME USE
WHAT KIND OF ANSWER IS THAT !?
Mm hm
THEN, OKAY
POOMF

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...WE WANT YOU TO TELL US THE MOMENT YOU FIND OUT.
I ALREADY TALKED TO MY HUSBAND, AND...
YES!
BUT I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS FOR YOU.
WE WON'T KNOW THE SEX FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.
...TWO BABIES.
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE...

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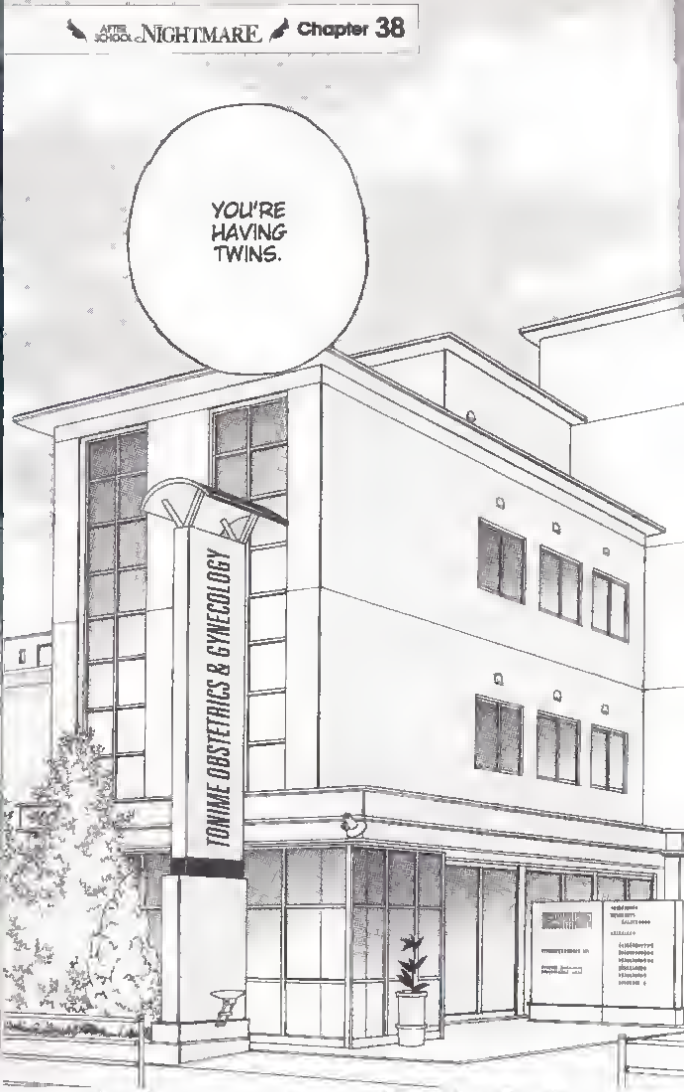

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WE MANAGED TO STOP MOST OF THE BLEEDING.
SHE'S NO LONGER IN DANGER OF MISCARRYING.
HOWEVER, HER CONDITION IS STILL UNSTABLE.
HER BLOOD PRESSURE HASN'T GONE DOWN TO A SAFE LEVEL.
IT'S RETARDING THE BABIES' GROWTH.
A NORMAL ET OF TWINS WOULD BE UCH LARGER BY NOW.
TELL ME, DOCTOR...IS IT CRITICAL?
WILL MY WIFE...
..AND OUR ABIES MAKE F THROUGH HE BIRTH?

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WE'LL JUST HAVE TO KEEP OUR FINGERS CROSSED AND WATCH HER PROGRESS.
LET'S JUST SAY IT'S TOO SOON TO BE OPTIMISTIC
I JUST ATE A HUGE LUNCH.
ME TOO.
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS IN THE HOSPITAL. THE BETTER YOU GET, THE HUNGRIER YOU GET!
UGH, HOW CAN I BE HUNGRY ALREADY?
I'M HAVING A LOT OF FUN HERE, THOUGH.
THERE'RE SO MANY WOMEN TO CHAT WITH!
TOTALLY!
Hee hee!
RATTLE

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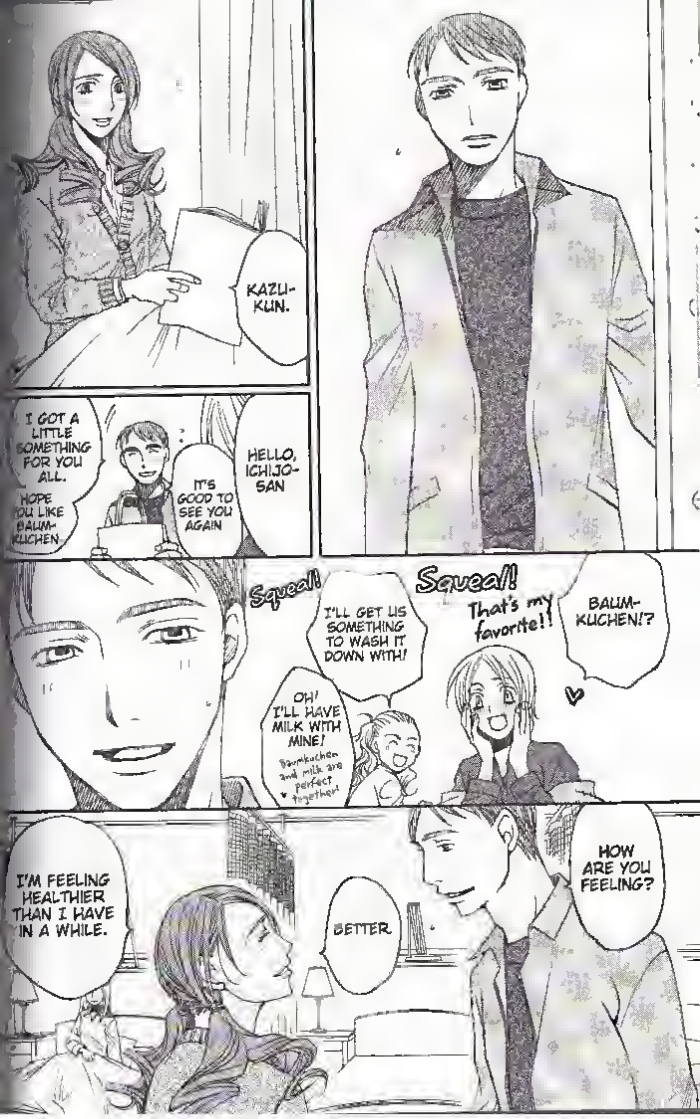
KAZU-KUN.
HELLO, ICHIJO-SAN
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN
I GOT A LITTLE SOMETHING FOR YOU ALL.
HOPE YOU LIKE BAUM-KUCHEN
Squeal!
I'LL GET US SOMETHING TO WASH IT DOWN WITH!
OH! I'LL HAVE MILK WITH MINE!
Baumkuchen and milk are a perfect pair!
Squeal!
That's my favorite!!
BAUM-KUCHEN!?
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
BETTER.
I'M FEELING HEALTHIER THAN I HAVE IN A WHILE.

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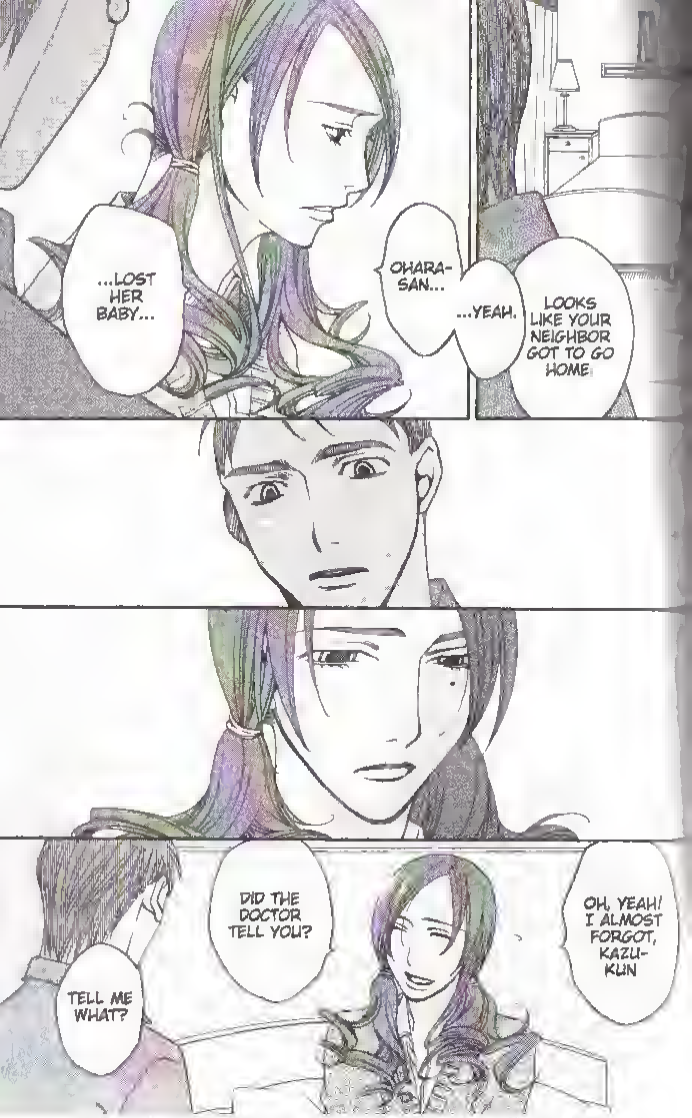

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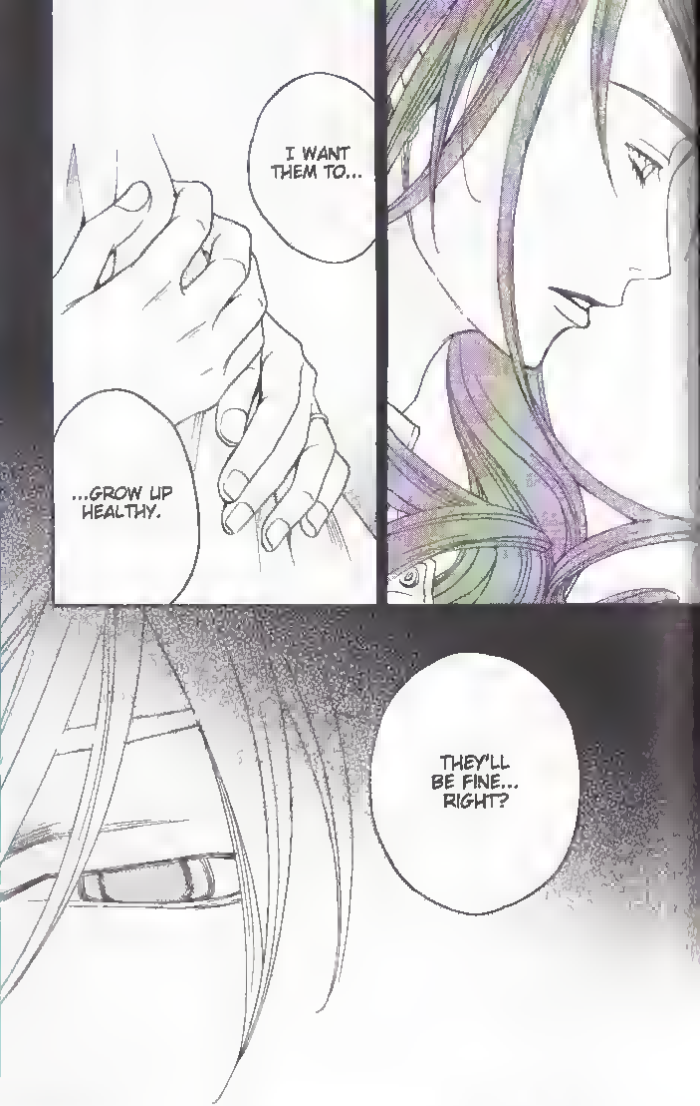

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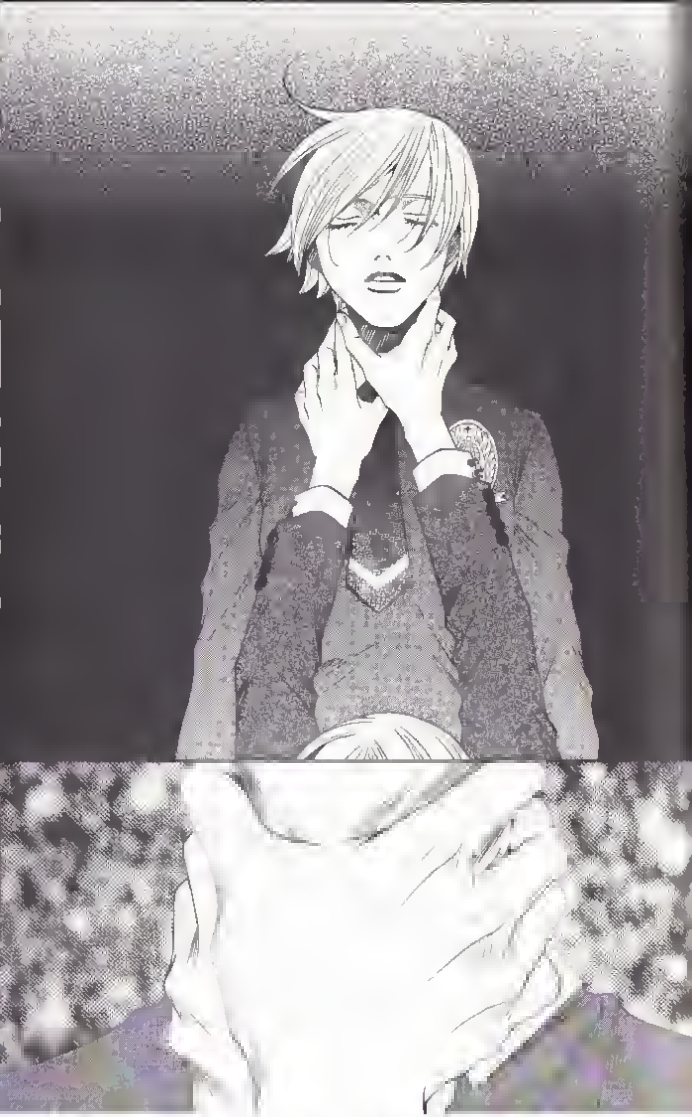

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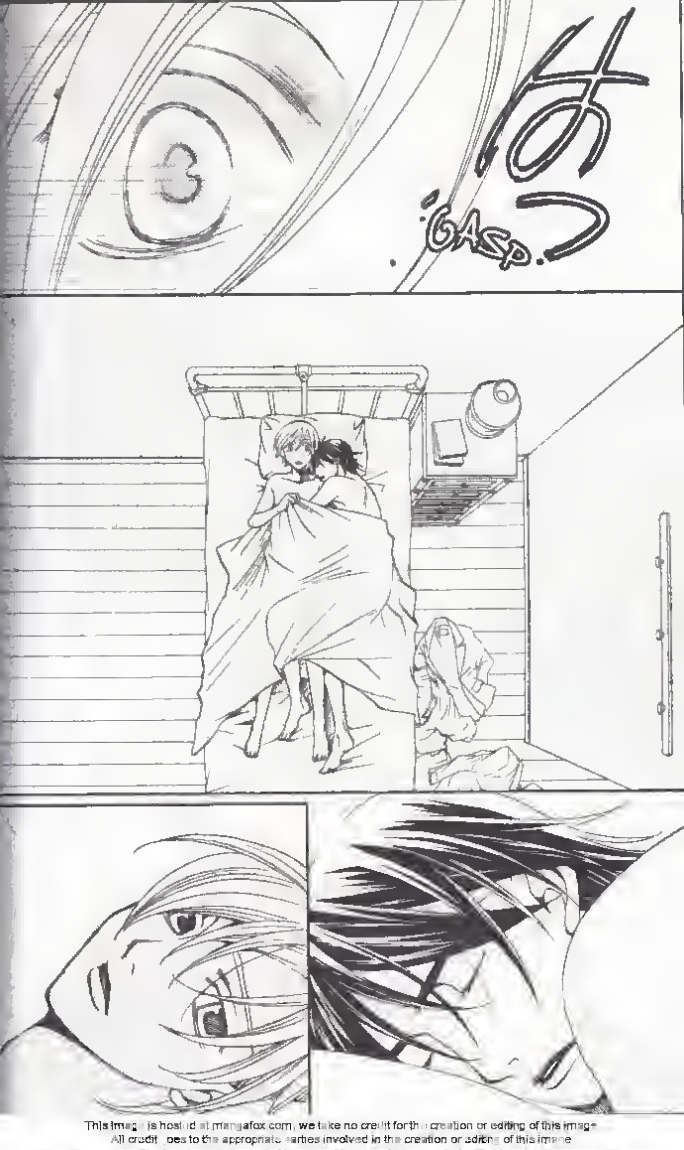

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...SUDDENLY MAKES YOU TRIP, AND YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A SLOPING VALLEY...
THE FLAT, STEADY PATH THAT STRETCHES OUT STRAIGHT AND FIRM BEFORE YOU...
OR THE CLOUDY GRAY SKY SUDDENLY OPENS UP, AND DAZZLES SO BRIGHTLY WITH THE SUN.

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I'VE DECIDED TO PLAY THE PART OF THE BLACK ROSE PRINCESS!
WHEN THE DESIGNERS SHOWED ME THEIR IDEA, I THOUGHT IT WAS SO ADORABLE..
...I KNEW I JUST HAD TO WEAR IT! ♡
I can't wait to see
AND CAN YOU THINK OF A BETTER PERSON TO PLAY A PRINCESS WHO TURNS INTO A TREE?
I DOUBT ANYONE HAS MORE EXPERIENCE THAN I DO!
Ha ha ha!
.....
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.

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IT FEELS LIKE I MISSED A LOT WHILE I WAS ASLEEP.
BUT DOESN'T THE PRINCESS...
...HAVE ROMANTIC SCENES WITH THE VAMPIRES? YOU OKAY WITH THAT?
HMM...
YOU KNOW...
THE PRINCESS GIVES THEM TEST AFTER TEST, TO SEE WHICH PRINCE IS DESERVING.
I THINK IT'S A GREAT PREMISE!
WHAT DO YOU SAY, SOU? JOIN ME!
You have to be Prince #1!
NO WAY, NO HOW!!
THEY HAVE IT HARDER THAN I DO!

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SURE, KUREHA BECAME FRIENDS WITH SOU, BUT...
...DEEP DOWN, SHE STILL DOESN'T LIKE GUYS IN GENERAL.
I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED.
THINGS LIKE LOVE AND HATE DON'T CHANGE THAT EASILY.
BUT STILL, I THINK IT'S A BIG STEP FOR HER...
...TO BE ABLE TO SMILE AND LAUGH ABOUT IT LIKE THAT.

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I'M SUCH AN IDIOT.
I JUST DO IT AUTOMATICALLY...
...EVEN THOUGH I DON'T HAVE ANYONE TO BLAME ANYMORE.
THOSE HABITS WILL TAKE A WHILE TO DIE.
BUT AT LEAST HE CAN SMILE AND TALK ABOUT IT NOW.
SOU'S SO FRAIL.
I NEVER KNOW WHAT COULD HURT HIM, AND THROW HIM INTO DESPAIR...

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I'M FINE WITH BEING THE PRINCE OF HYPOCRISY.
I DON'T MIND SPINNING MY WHEELS.
I'M THROUGH WITH CARING ABOUT WHAT EVERYONE SAYS.
SORRY FOR BEING AFFECTIONATE WHILE I'M STILL DRESSED LIKE A GUY.
I'M GOING TO DO WHAT I THINK IS RIGHT.
I'M GOING TO DO WHAT I WANT TO DO.
EVEN SO, I'LL SAVE HIM WHENEVER I CAN.
EVEN IF HE BRUSHES AWAY MY HAND, I'LL STILL HOLD IT OUT TO HIM.
EVEN IF SOMEBODY... LIKE SOU...REJECTS OR HATES ME...

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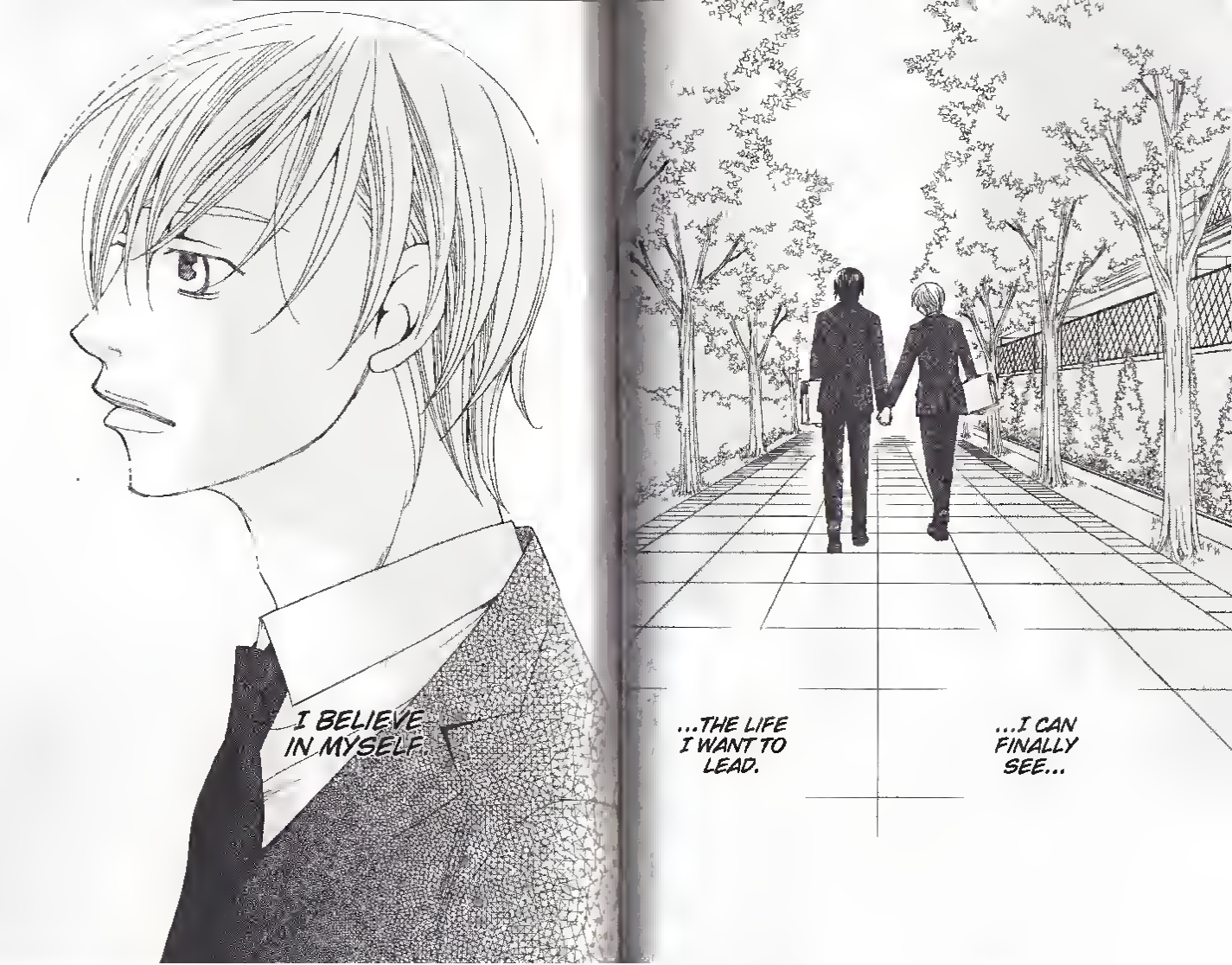

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...I FINALLY UNDERSTAND...

REGARDLESS OF WHETHER I'M A GUY OR A GIRL...

...MY TASK IS BE WHO I AM.

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NOOOO!
WHAT!? I DON'T WANT YOU TO TAKE MY MEASUREMENTS!
GIVE ME THREE MORE DAYS ON MY DIET!
OH, STOP IT! WE NEED THEM IF WE WANT TO HAVE THE DRESS READY IN TIME!
THE ART CLUB SAID THEY'D HELP US WITH THE BACKDROPS!
Yay!

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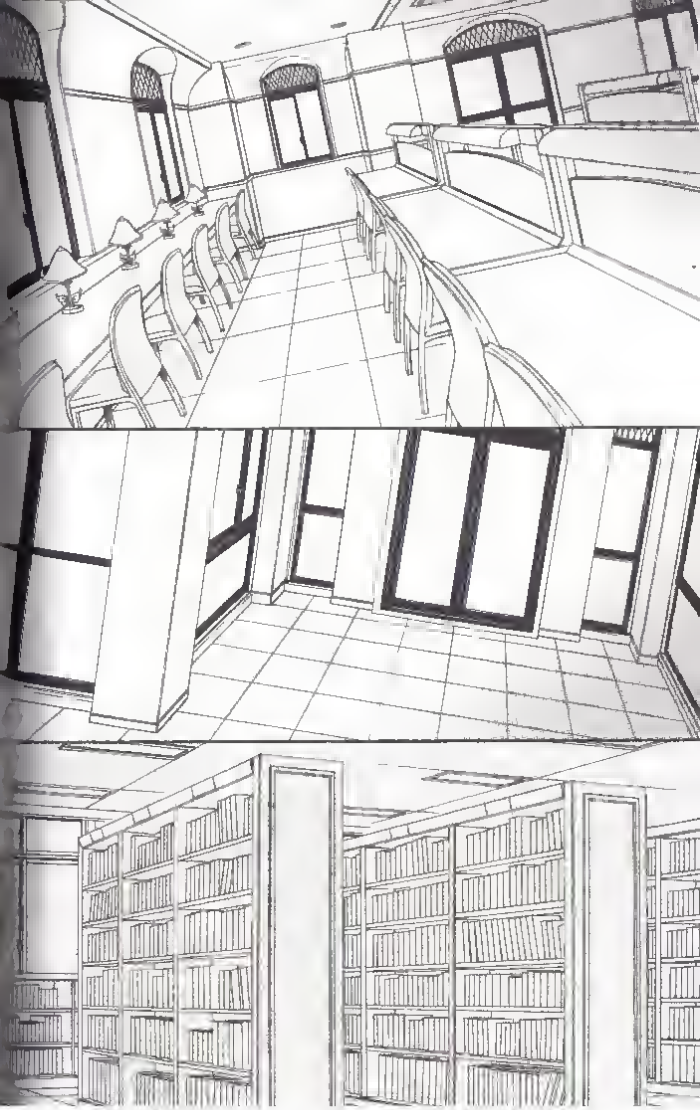

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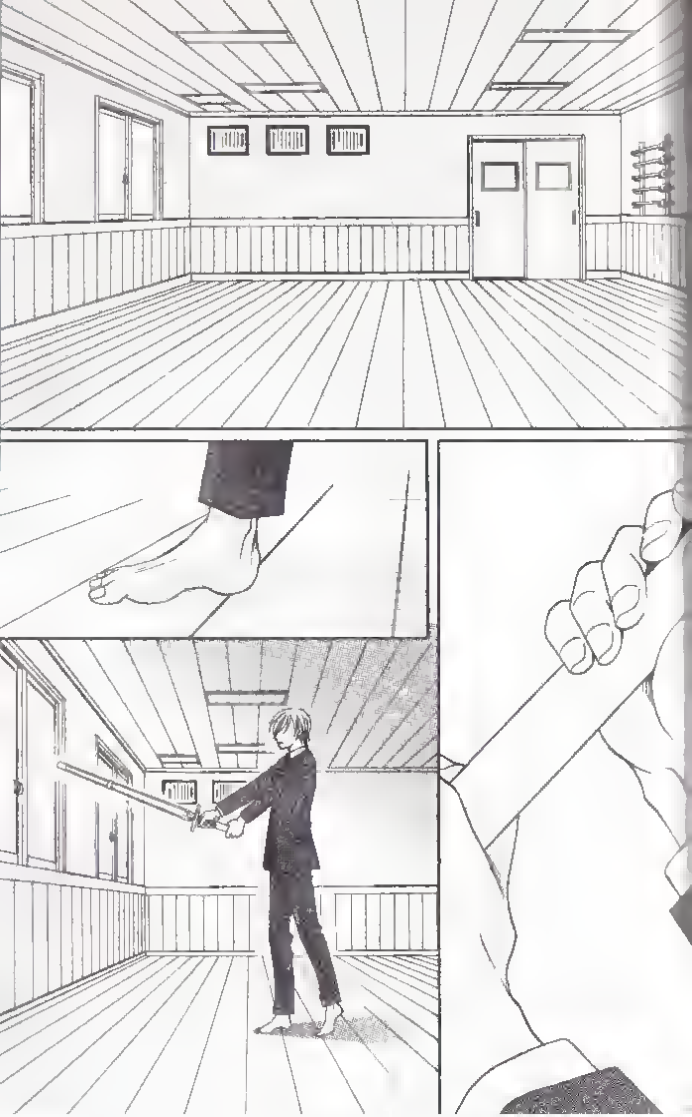

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I FORGET WHO IT WAS, BUT THAT'S BESIDE THE POINT.
Uh.
THE LAST LEADER QUIT, I THINK...
I GUESS HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN THE DREAM CLASS.
WHAT DO WE DO!?
I CAN'T DO IT!
NOT ME!
THE THING IS...
...EVERYONE WAS SO BUSY WITH PLANNING THE CULTURAL FESTIVAL, THERE WERE NO TAKERS.
I'VE BEEN HERE THE LONGEST ANYWAY.
I'LL DO IT.

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I BET KUREHA WILL MAKE THE PERFECT PRINCESS
STILL, THE FACT THAT YOU CAN SAY THAT WITH A SMILE MEANS YOU'RE MAKING PROGRESS
YOU LOOK GOOD IN STUFF SHE COULD NEVER WEAR, SO DON'T WORRY
I'M SO JEALOUS OF GIRLS THAT LOOK GOOD ALL DRESSED UP.
LUCKY HER. ♡

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WHEN THAT TIME COMES...
...I HOPE I CAN SAY WHAT I HAVE TO.
EVERYONE HAS TO SAY GOODBYE SOME TIME.
I LOVE YOU.
NO MATTER WHAT LIFE...
NO MATTER WHAT PERSON...

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...THE FEELINGS...

I HOPE I CAN EXPRESS...

...AND THE WORDS THAT MATTER MOST.

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DOOOONG
DI-I-NG
...SO I CAN'T GAIN ANY WEIGHT BEFORE THE FESTIVAL..
Not in front of all these people
WELL, THEY TOOK MY MEASURE-MENTS FOR THE DRESS..
I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT BEFORE...
UH... WELL... ACTUALLY
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN, RIGHT, MASHIRO-KUN?
GIRLS HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THINGS LIKE THAT!
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT GETTING FAT.
You're petite you always will be
WELL, I CAN'T LET EVERYONE DOWN..
YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT THIS ROLE, AREN'T YOU?

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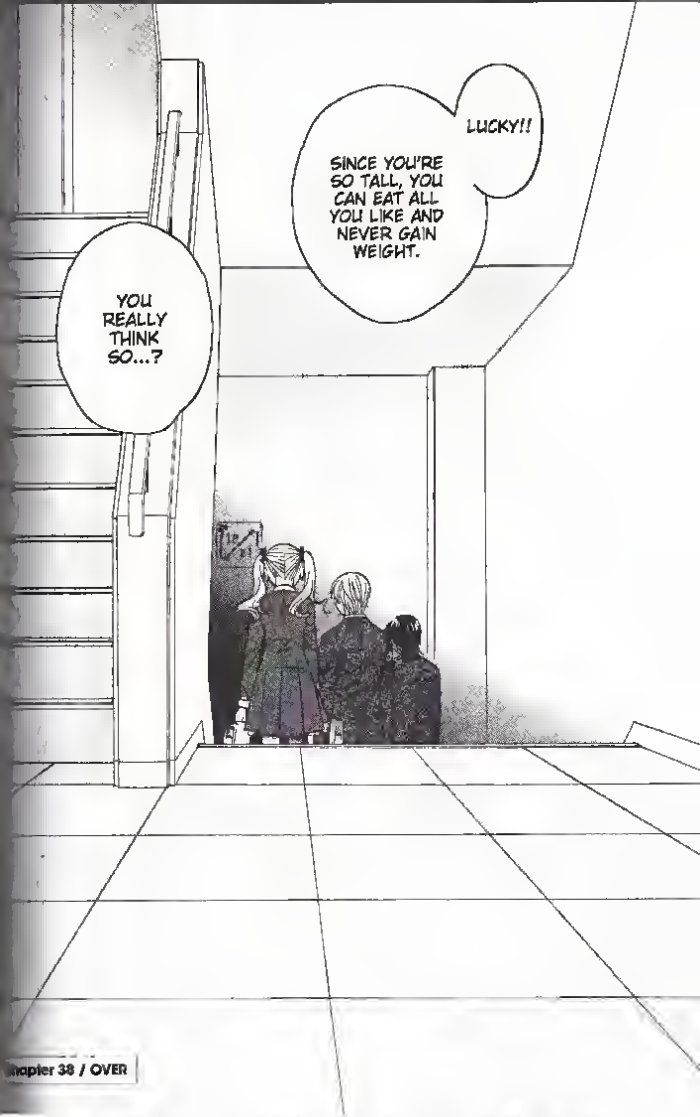

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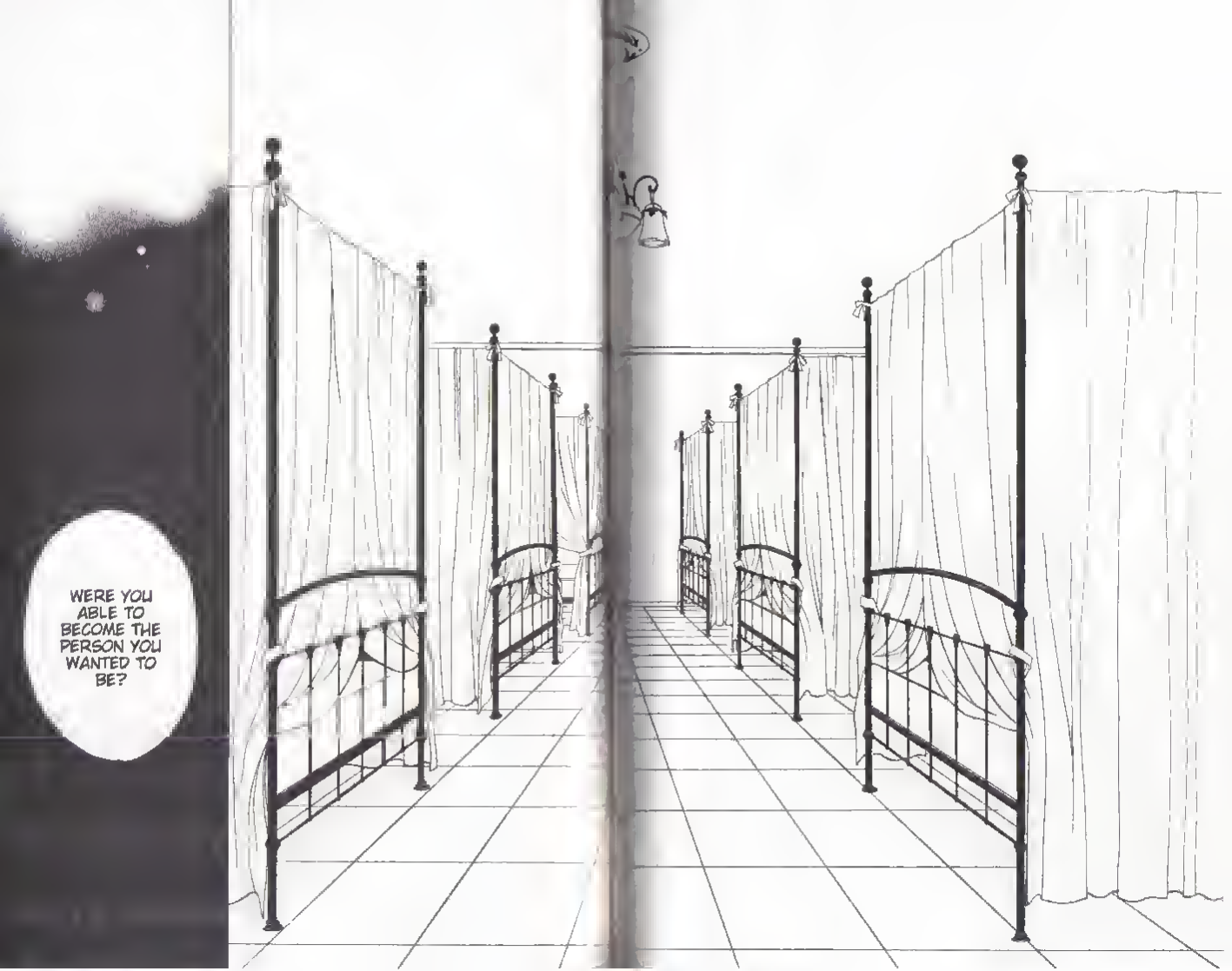

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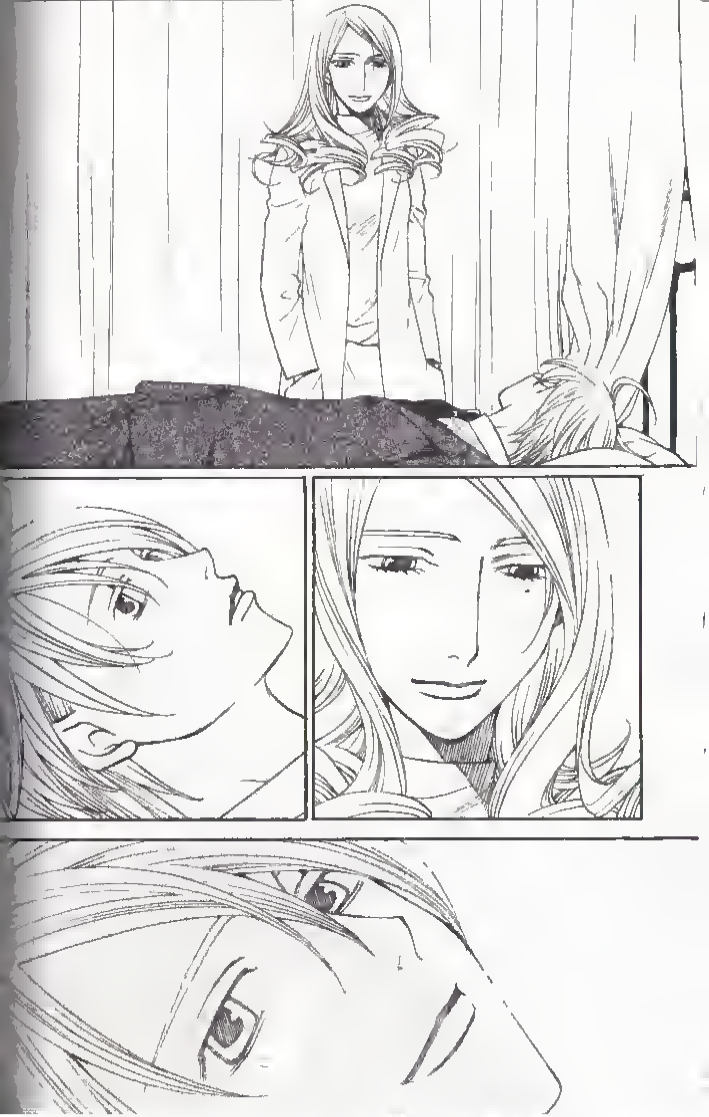

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BUT NOW I KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MY GOAL AND MY DREAMS.
AND I HAVE A LOT MORE STAIRS TO CLIMB.
MY IDEAL'S A LOT FARTHER OFF THAN I THOUGHT.
THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.
...IS BEING TRUE TO WHO I AM.
WHAT'S IMPORTANT...

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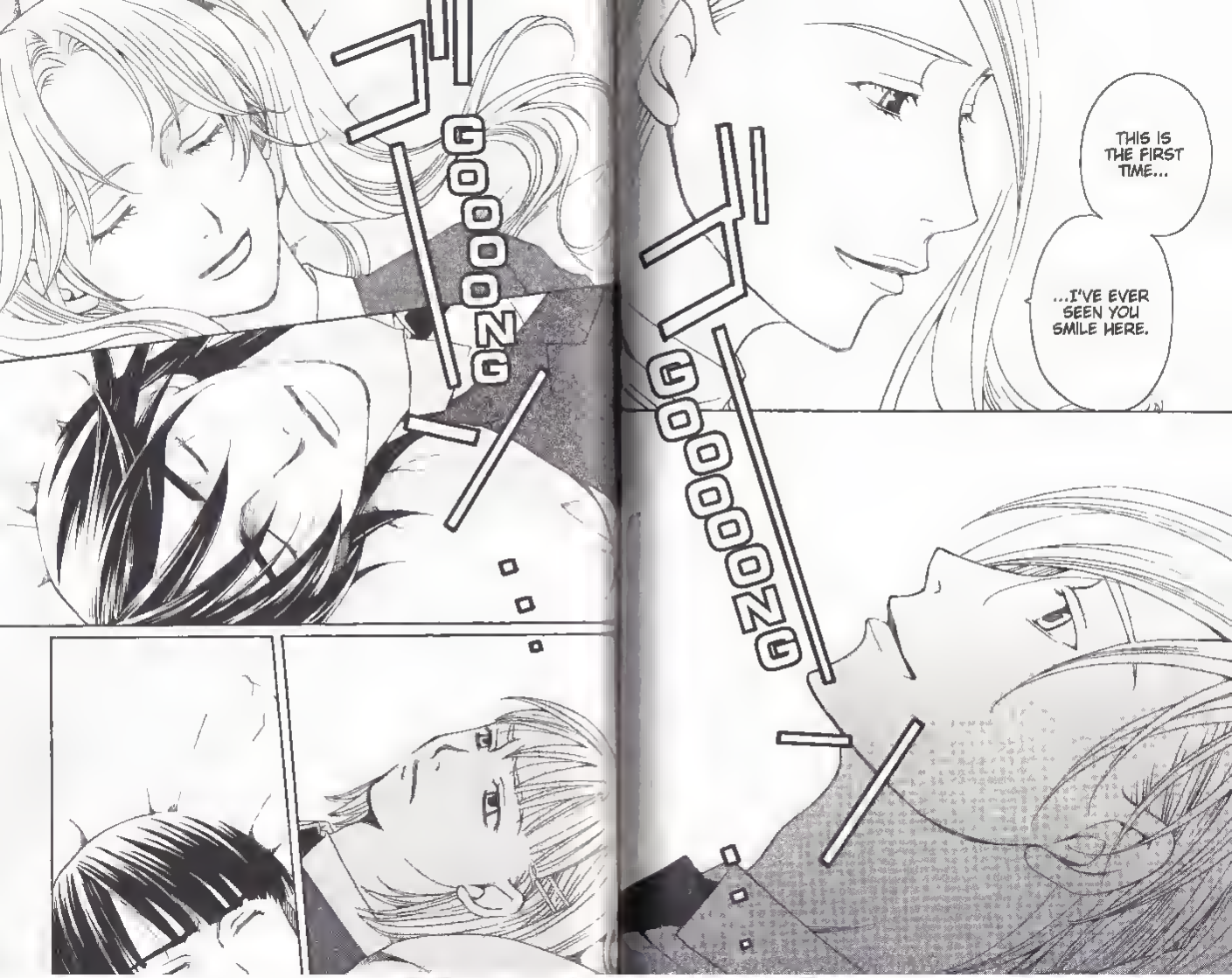

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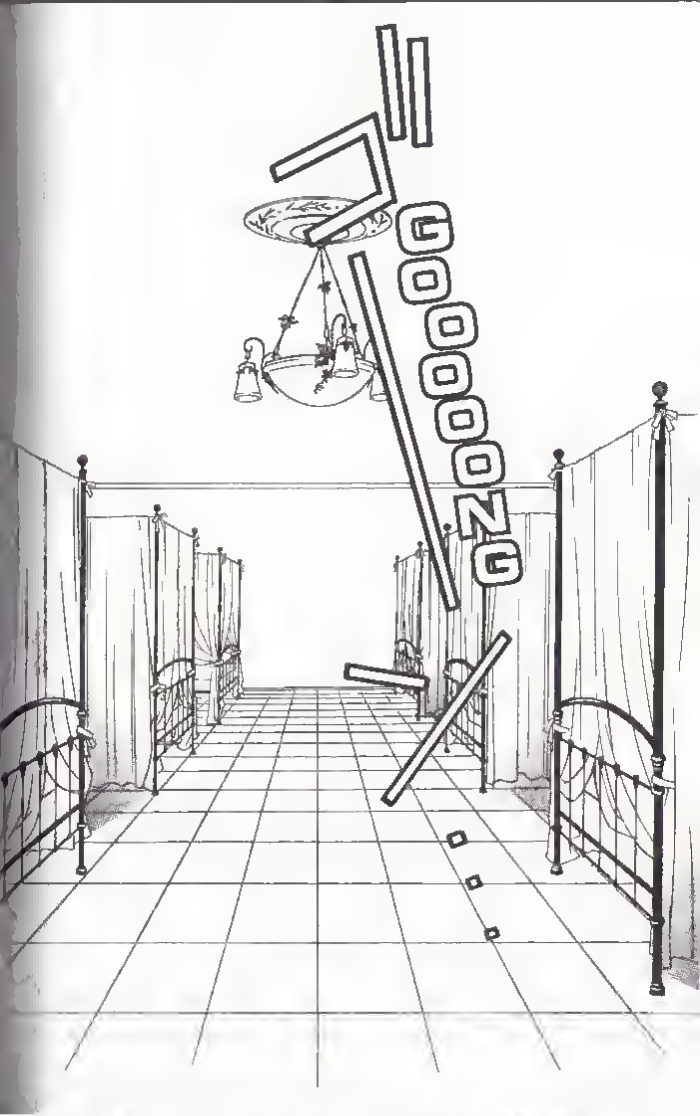

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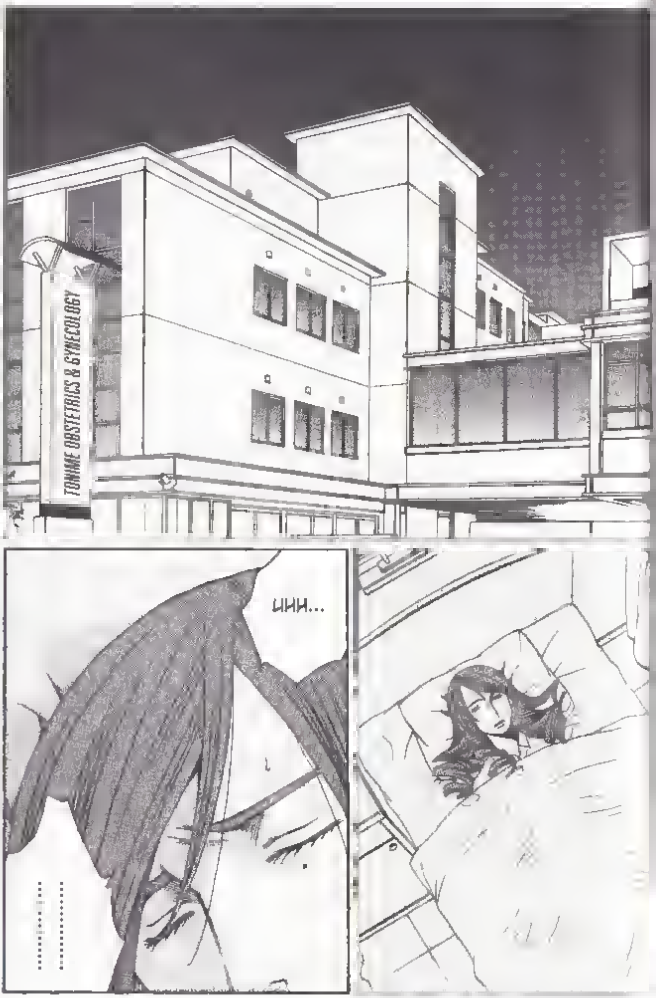

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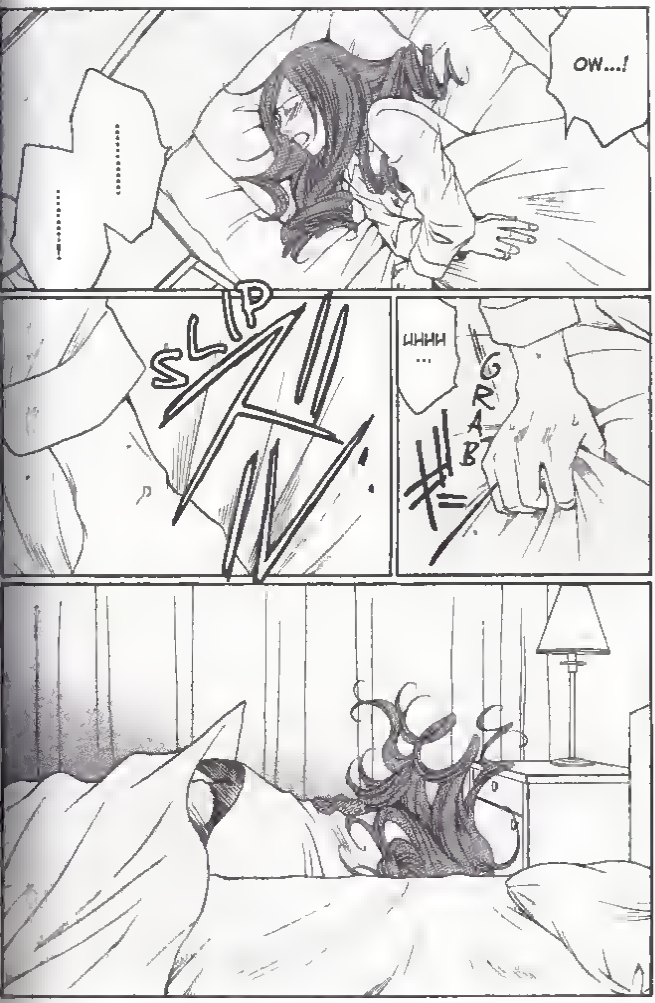

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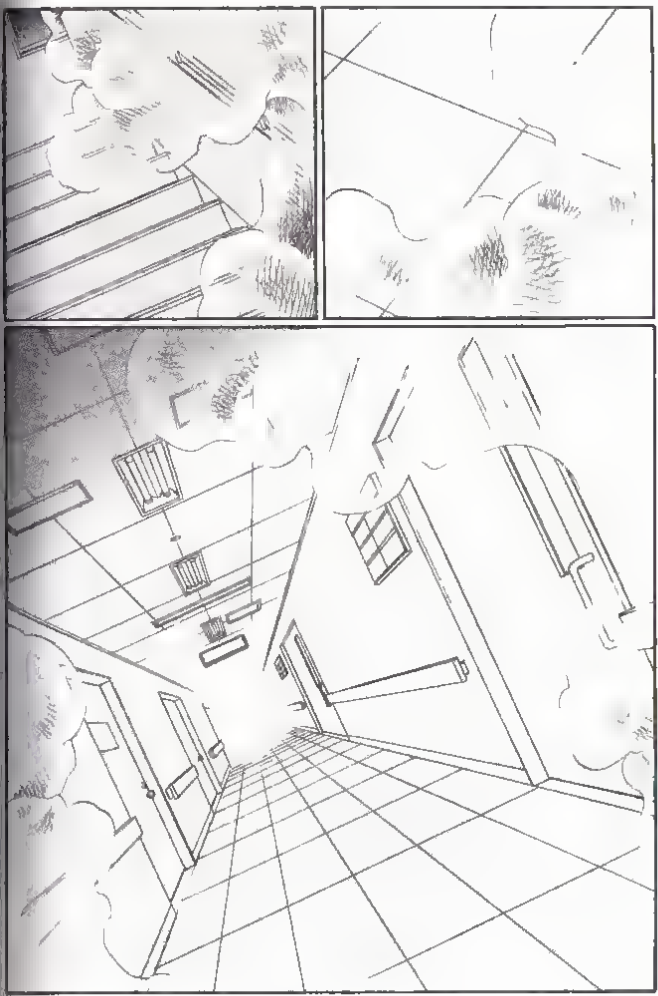

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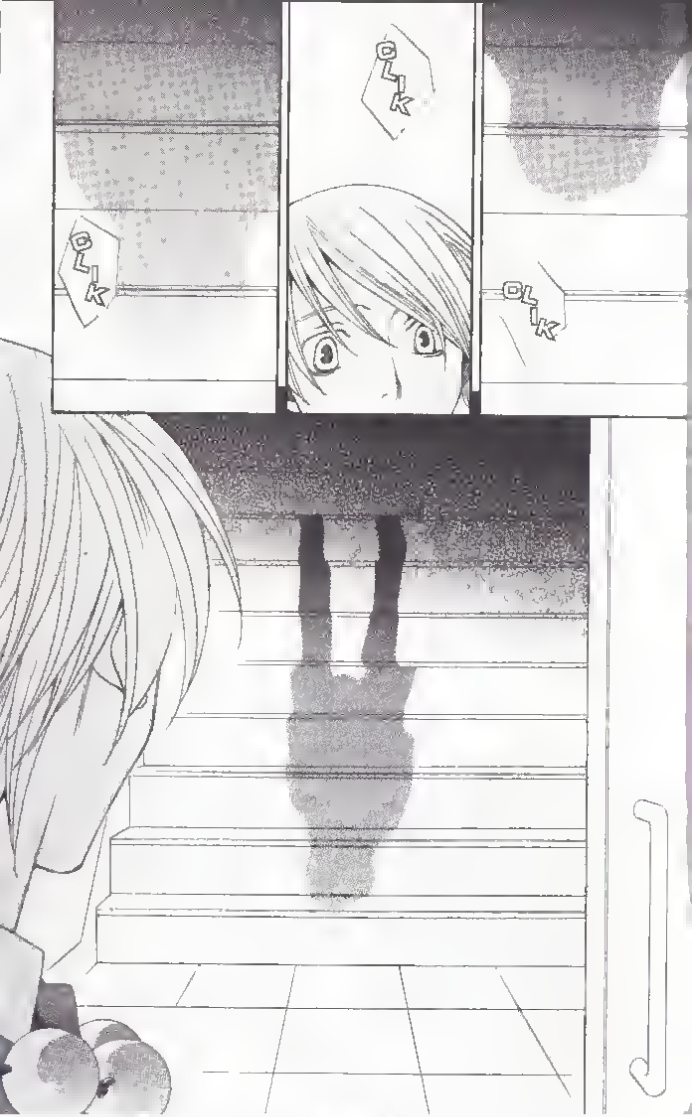

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THUD
TWIST
OW!
.....!
CHOMP

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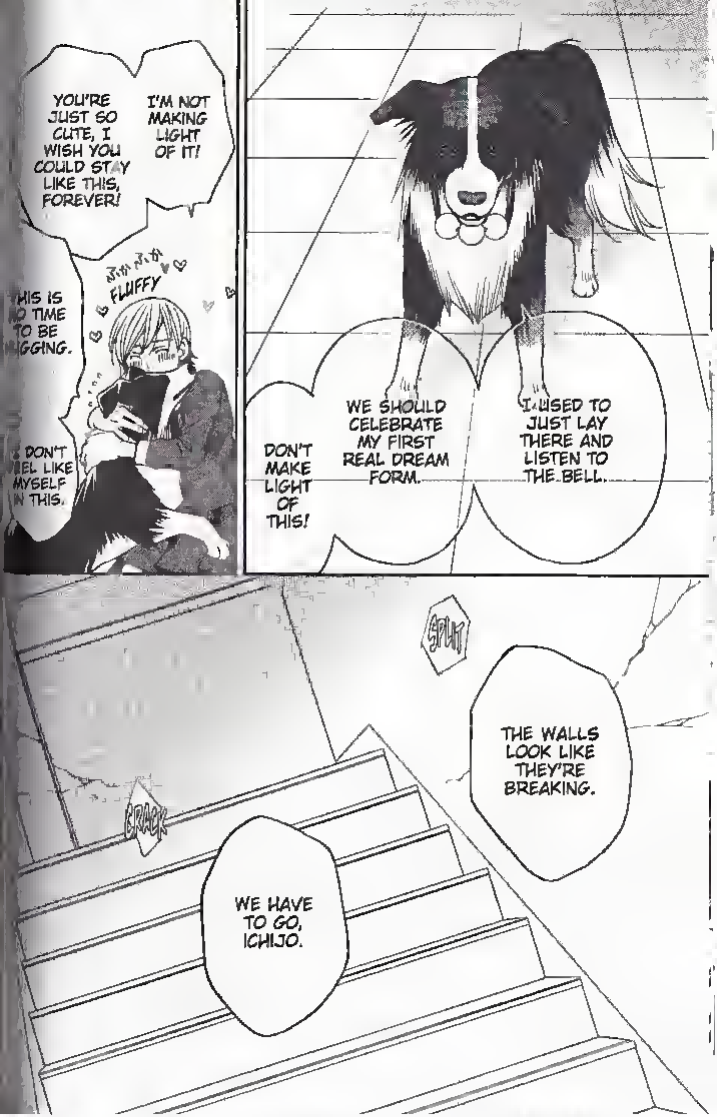
I'M NOT MAKING LIGHT OF IT!
YOU'RE JUST SO CUTE, I WISH YOU COULD STAY LIKE THIS, FOREVER!
FLUFFY
HIS IS O TIME TO BE GGING.
DON'T EL LIKE MYSELF N THIS.
I USED TO JUST LAY THERE AND LISTEN TO THE BELL.
WE SHOULD CELEBRATE MY FIRST REAL DREAM FORM.
DON'T MAKE LIGHT OF THIS!
SPLIT
THE WALLS LOOK LIKE THEY'RE BREAKING.
CRACK
WE HAVE TO GO, ICHIJO.

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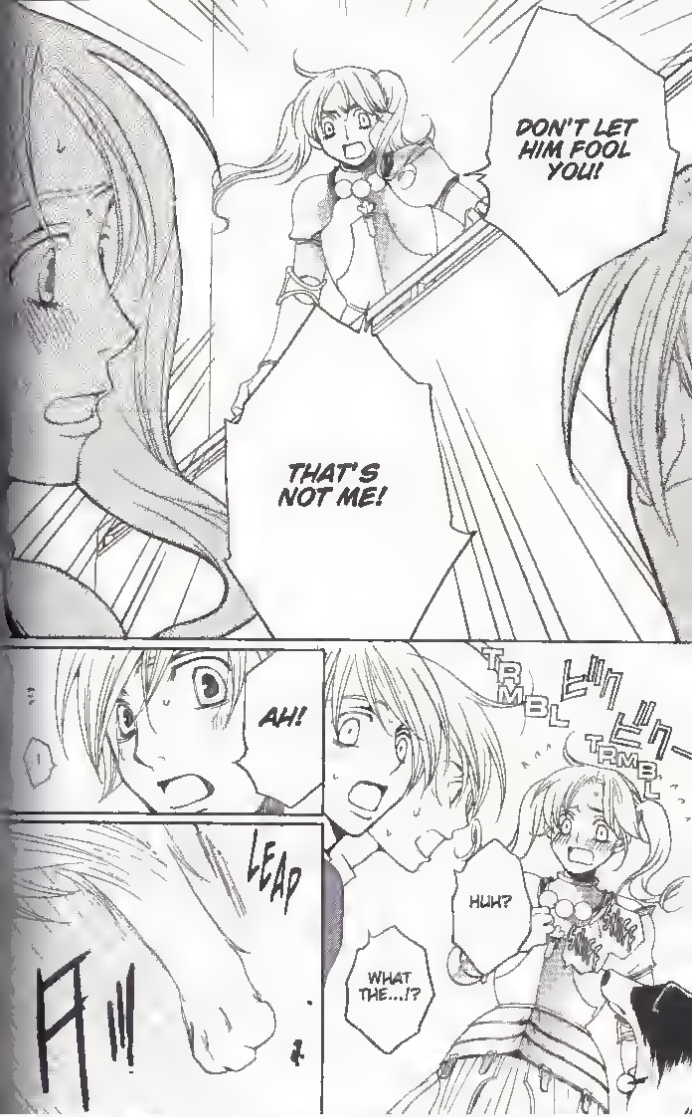

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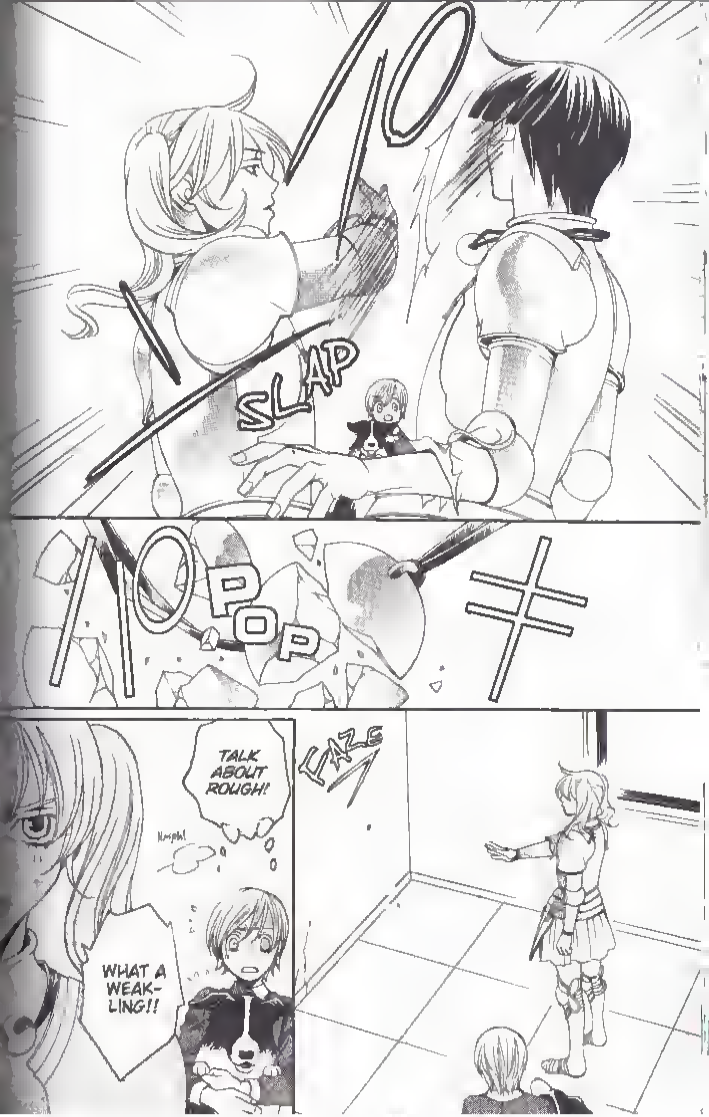

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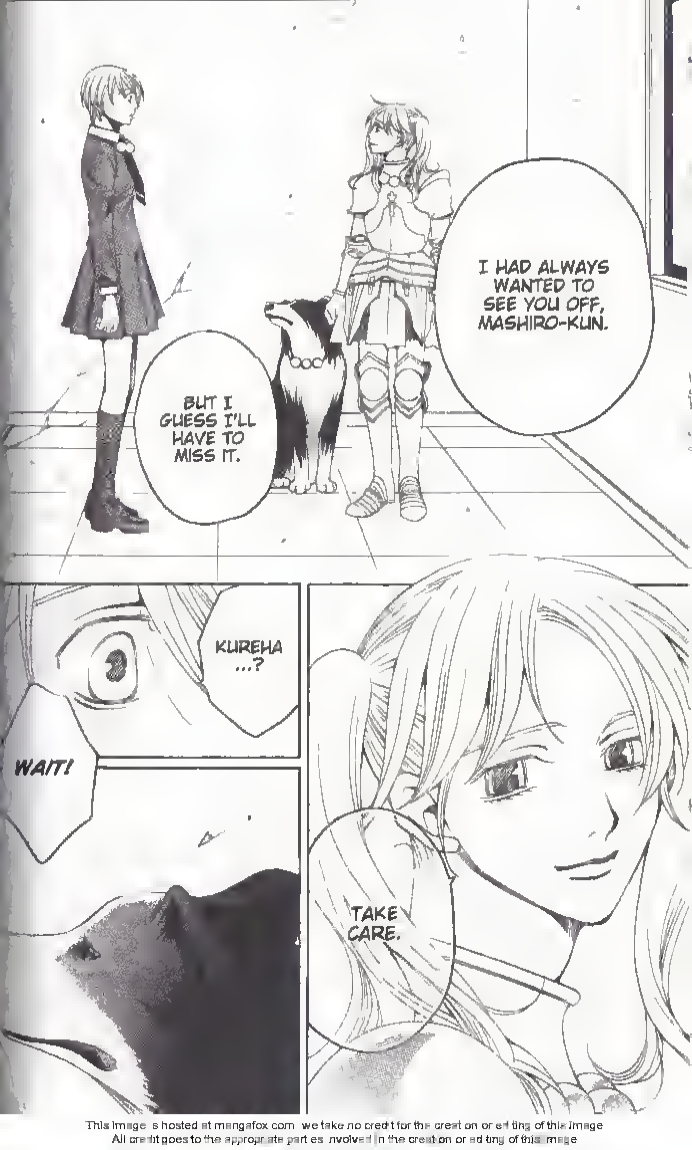

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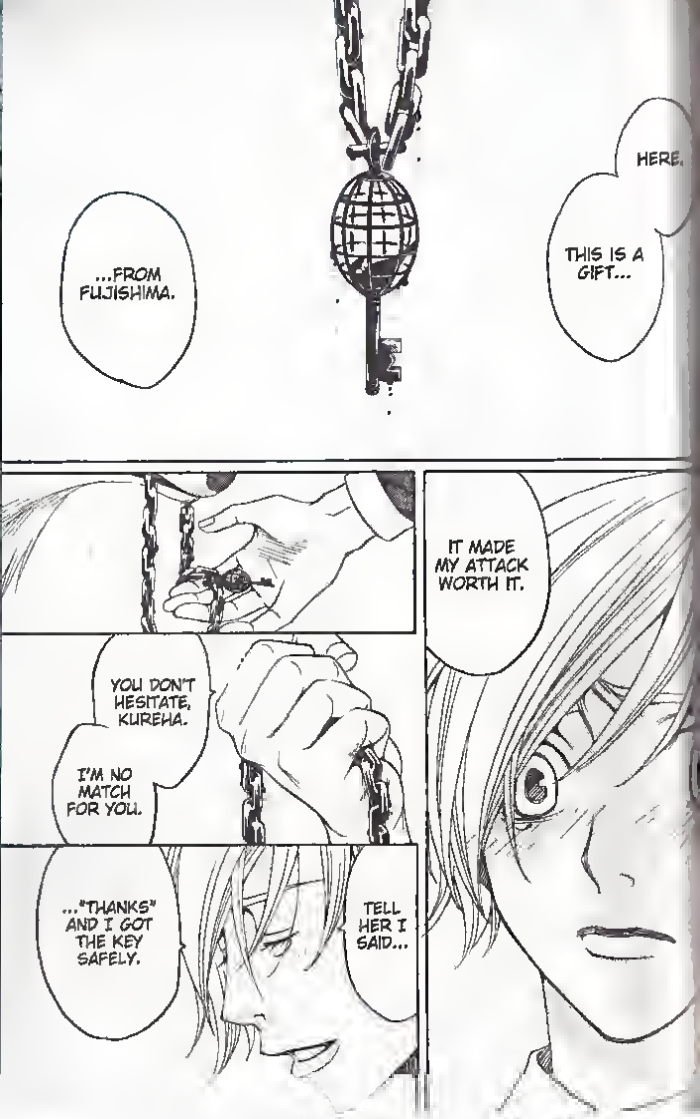
HERE.
THIS IS A GIFT...
...FROM FUJISHIMA.
IT MADE MY ATTACK WORTH IT.
YOU DON'T HESITATE, KUREHA.
I'M NO MATCH FOR YOU.
...THANKS" AND I GOT THE KEY SAFELY.
TELL HER I SAID...

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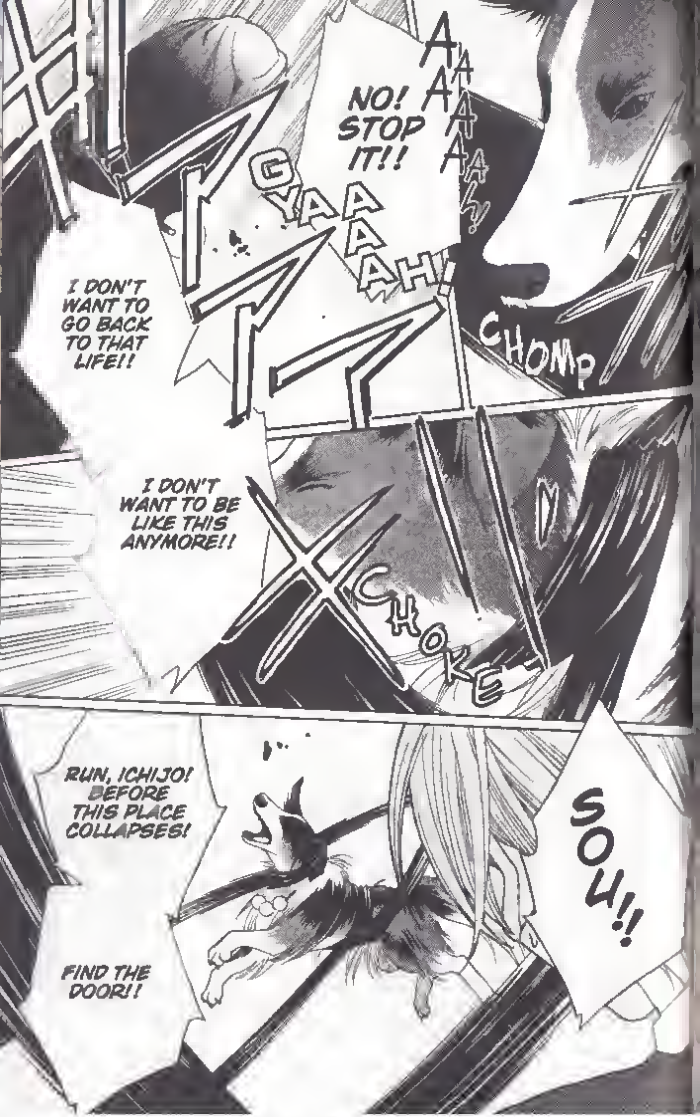

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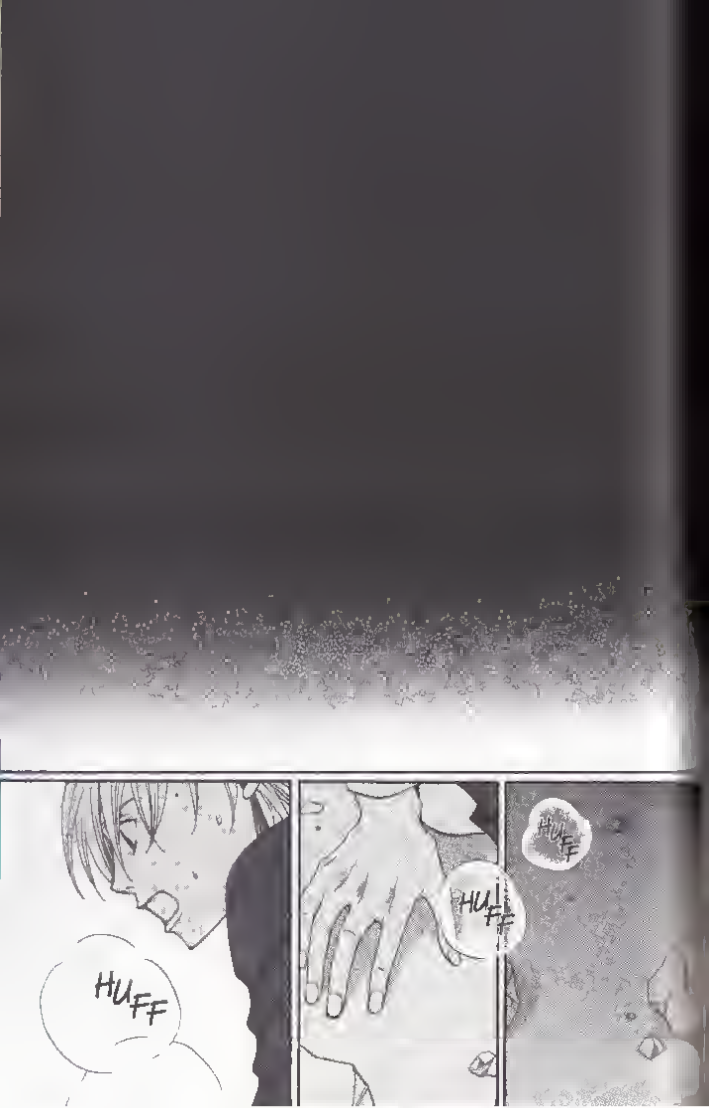

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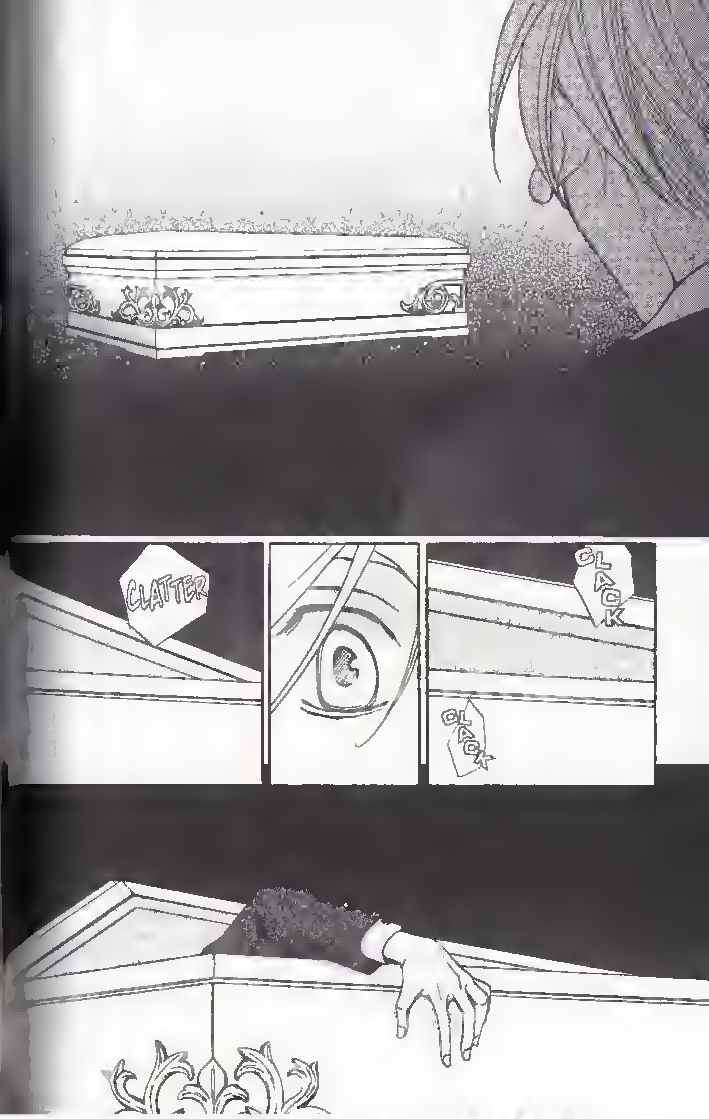

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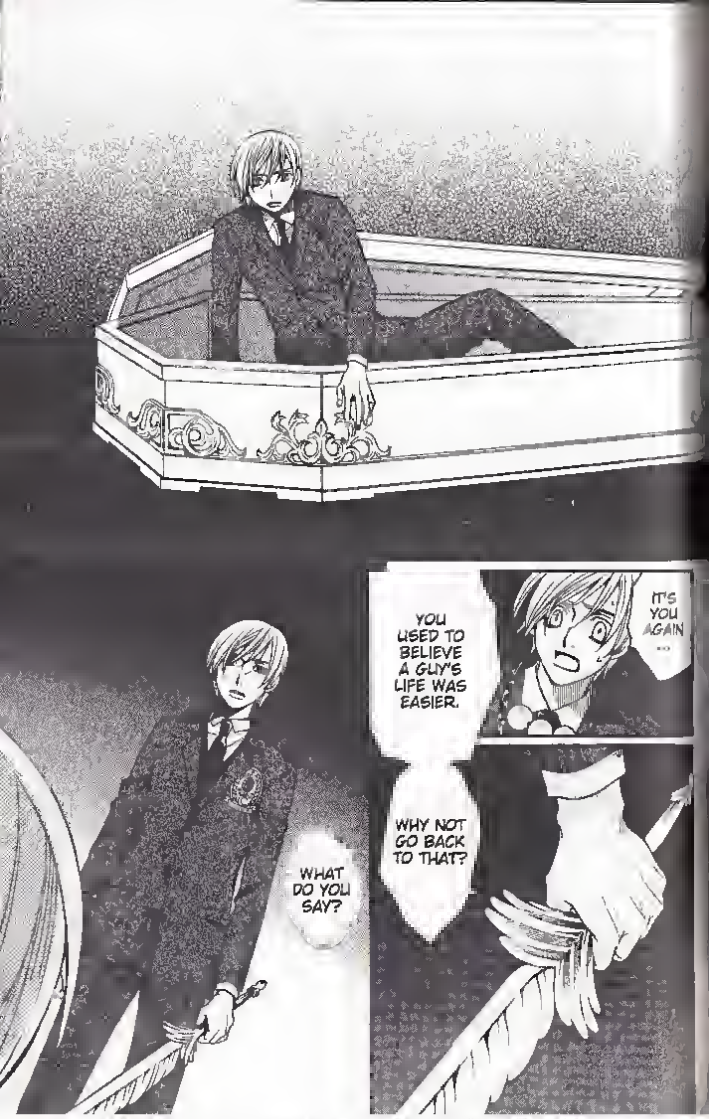

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NO!
IT'S NOT THAT!
SOMEHOW, I REALIZED I WAS ALREA DECIDED.
I TOLD YOU! ALL I CAN DO IS BE WHO I AM!
THIS BODY CAN'T BE HELPED. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH KUREHA OR SOU!
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!!
SLASH

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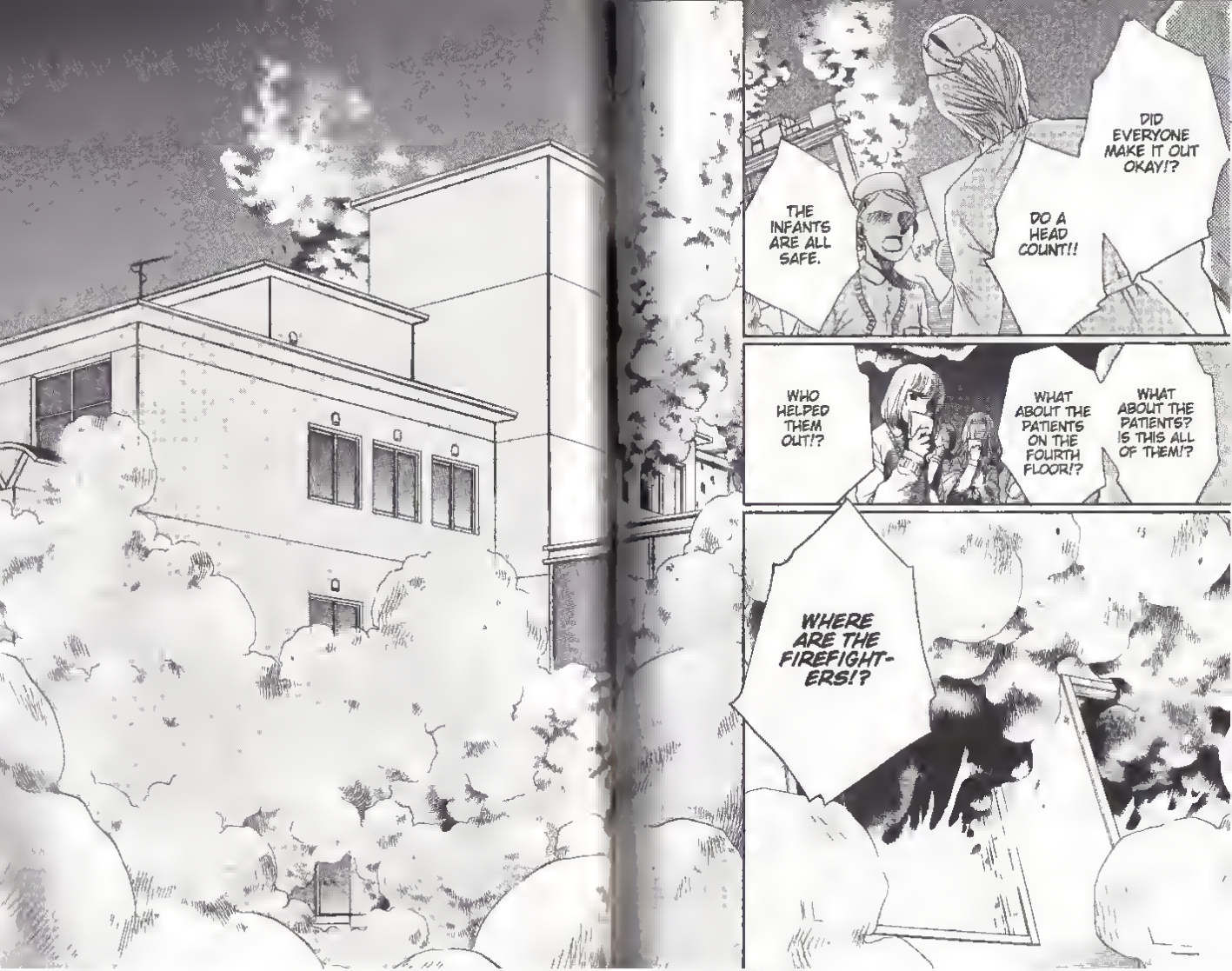
THE INFANTS ARE ALL SAFE.
DO A HEAD COUNT!!
DID EVERYONE MAKE IT OUT OKAY!?
WHO HELPED THEM OUT!?
WHAT ABOUT THE PATIENTS ON THE FOURTH FLOOR!?
WHAT ABOUT THE PATIENTS? IS THIS ALL OF THEM!?
WHERE ARE THE FIREFIGHTERS!?

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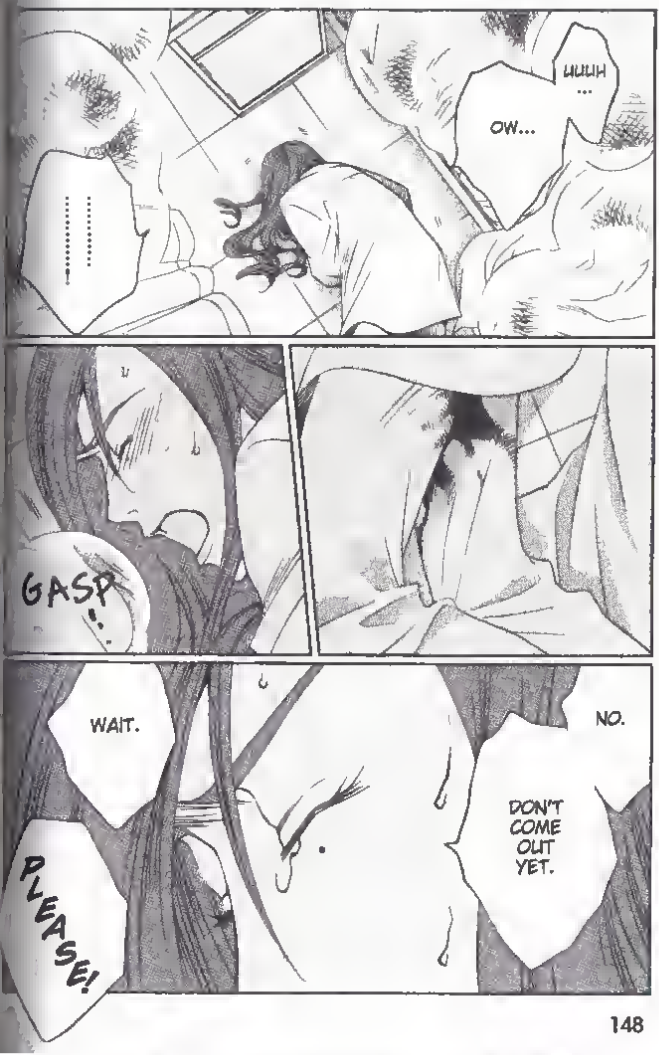

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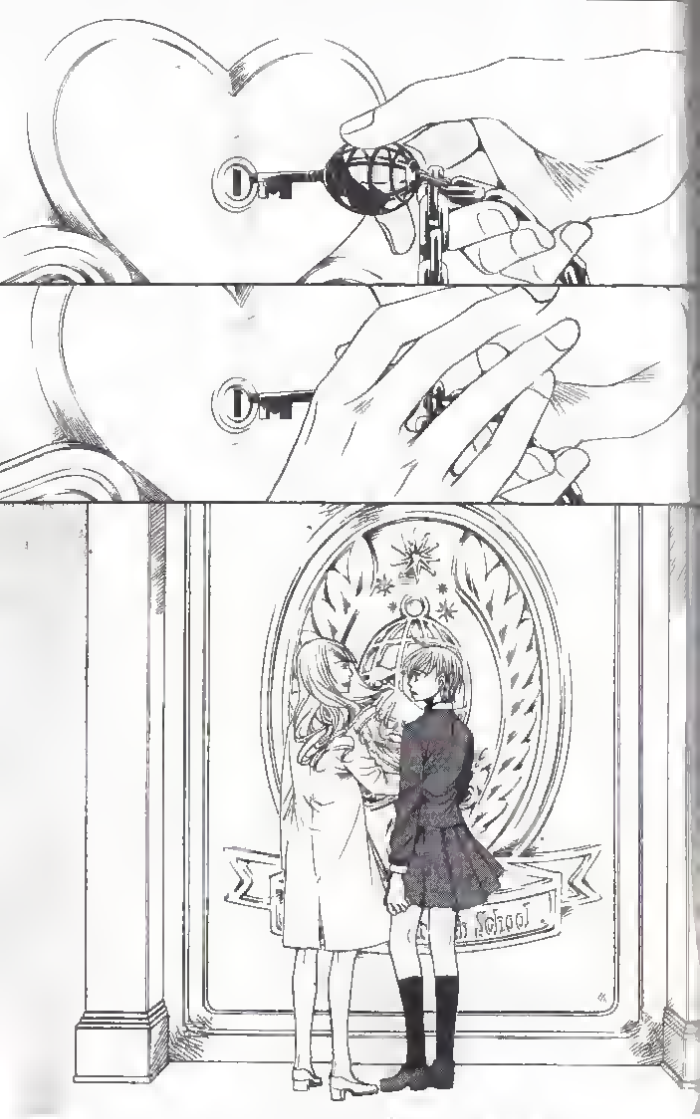

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WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?
WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO FOR HIM WHILE WE'RE HERE!?
ALL WE CAN DO IS PRAY.
IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT...
...IT'S THE BEST WE CAN DO!
IF WE HAVE TO GO, WE CAN HELP SOMEONE BEFORE WE DO!
IT'S BETTER TO END THIS PRAYING FOR SOMEONE'S HAPPINESS FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS, DON'T YOU SEE!?

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WE'RE OUT OF TIME, SO IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO!
PLEASE!!
.....
YOU, TOO!!
DON'T JUST LEAN ON SOMEONE ELSE.
SHOW ME WHAT'S IN YOUR HEART!
SHOW ME YOUR STRENGTH — RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW!
NOW IS ALL WE HAVE!
THERE'S NO TIME FOR ENVY OR REGRET!!
HOLD ON.
JUST THINK LIKE THAT...
...AND YOU'LL BE FINE!

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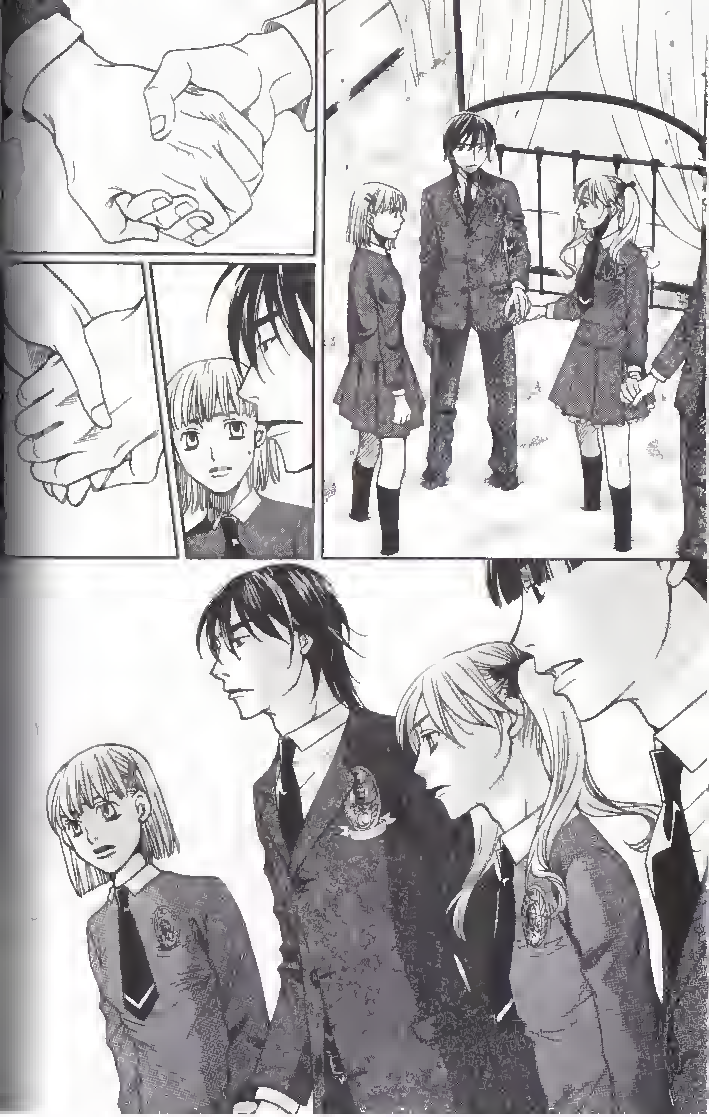

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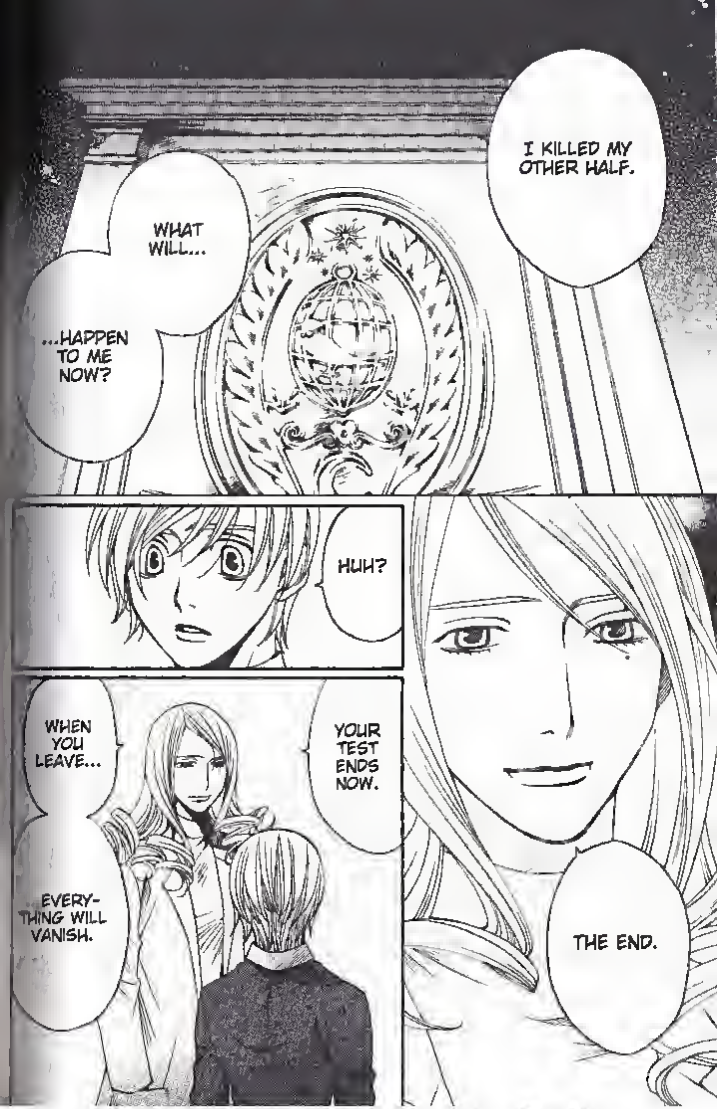

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EVERYTHING WILL RESET...
...AND START ANEW.
AND THEN, ELSEWHERE, YOU WILL FIND A NEW BEGINNING.
YOUR LIFE?
ARE YOU SAYING MY LIFE ENDS HERE?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
EVERY-THING WILL VANISH?
OF COURSE! I'VE BEEN THROUGH PLENTY! THERE WAS THE DAY I GOT MY FIRST PERIOD, AND MET YOU. .
DID YOU EVER .
...REALLY HAVE ONE...
...IN THE FIRST PLACE?
YOU DIDN'T NEED ANYTHING ELSE.
THERE WAS NOTHING BEFORE THAT.
I...
NOTH-ING, OF COURSE.
WHAT DO YOU REMEM-BER?
AND BEFORE THAT?

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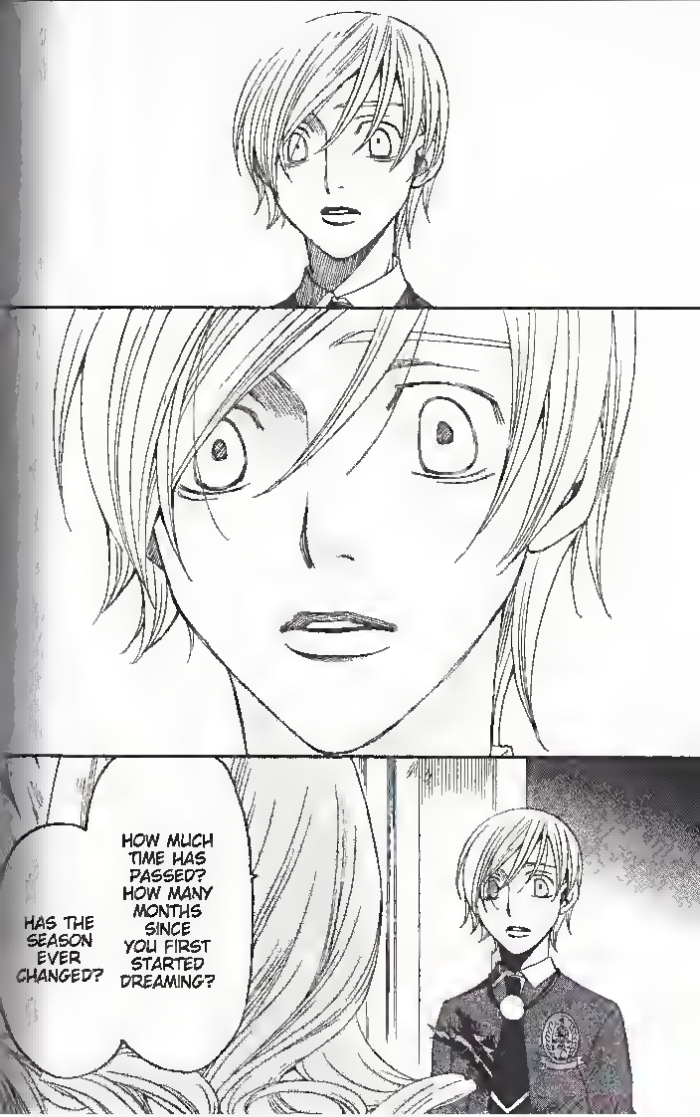

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ALL THE STUDENTS, INCLUDING YOURSELF...
...ARE NEITHER LIVING, NOR DEAD.
YOU WERE A UNIQUE CASE.
YOU WERE TWO WHO WERE MEANT TO EXIST TOGETHER.
BUT THERE IS NOW ONLY FATE ENOUGH FOR ONE.

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YOU TRIED TO STEAL IT FROM ONE ANOTHER.
YOU FOUGHT SO HARD FOR THE BETTER LIFE, THAT OF A BOY OR A GIRL.
YOU ARE ONE BODY...
...WITH TWO SOULS.
THEN, YOU MADE YOUR DECISION.
I CANNOT SAY IF YOU DECIDED YOUR FATE...
...OR MERELY ACCEPTED YOUR DESTINY.

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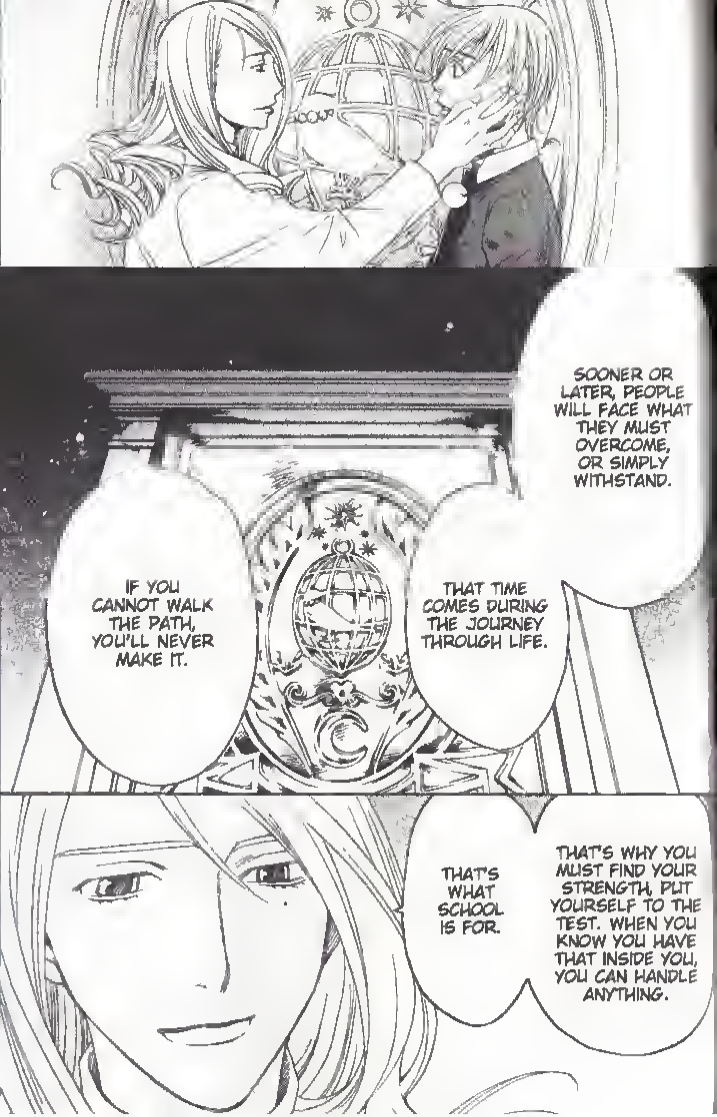
SOONER OR LATER, PEOPLE WILL FACE WHAT THEY MUST OVERCOME, OR SIMPLY WITHSTAND.
IF YOU CANNOT WALK THE PATH, YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT.
THAT TIME COMES DURING THE JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE.
THAT'S WHAT SCHOOL IS FOR.
THAT'S WHY YOU MUST FIND YOUR STRENGTH, PUT YOURSELF TO THE TEST. WHEN YOU KNOW YOU HAVE THAT INSIDE YOU, YOU CAN HANDLE ANYTHING.

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THE BURDENS PEOPLE SHOULDER IN LIFE ARE JUST TESTS THAT ESTABLISH OUR DESTINY.
ONCE YOU PASS THROUGH THESE DOORS, YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF IN A DIFFERENT SITUATION, WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND DIFFERENT PROBLEMS.
THE ONLY CERTAINTY...
...IS THAT YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH TO CARRY ON.
GRADUATING IS PROOF OF THAT.

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DON'T FORGET.
THOUGH I KNOW YOU WILL WHEN YOU LEAVE HERE...
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS NOW, YOU'LL BE OKAY.
NO MATTER HOW SCARED YOU ARE, NEVER FEAR.
CRUEL CRUEL
TREMBLE
NO MATTER WHAT...
...NEVER GIVE UP. NEVER SETTLE, NEVER STOP FIGHTING.
NURSE ...?
MASHIRO-KUN.
TREMBLE

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Extra ASN Talk

After reading to the very end, and seeing everything that happens, once you read it over from the start, you realize that here and there hints had been planted all along the way to make you think "Of course, it makes so much sense now!" Lines that you took to mean only what they said at face value take on much deeper levels of significance. Things that are never explained suddenly become as clear as day once you see the hints and clues, so you feel like a detective as you put the pieces of the puzzle together!

Be it a movie or a novel, those are the kinds of things I love a story to have.

I wrote "After School Nightmare" to feature such deeper significance, so once you read the final page, I hope you go back to page one, take a closer look at all the volume covers, and read the whole thing over with a fresh new eye. That would make

Kazuhiro Mariko

The expecting couple were given names, but there was never really an opportunity to show that in the course of the story.

That reminds me that the Nurse in the infirmary was never given a name. Then again, taking into account her transient existence, she didn't have much need for one!

FWOOSH
I KNOW THE SMOKE'S THICK, BUT WE HAVE TO LOOK EVERY-WHERE!
LET'S CHECK UPSTAIRS.
THIS FLOOR IS CLEAR.
SAVE ME!
PLEASE SAVE ME!

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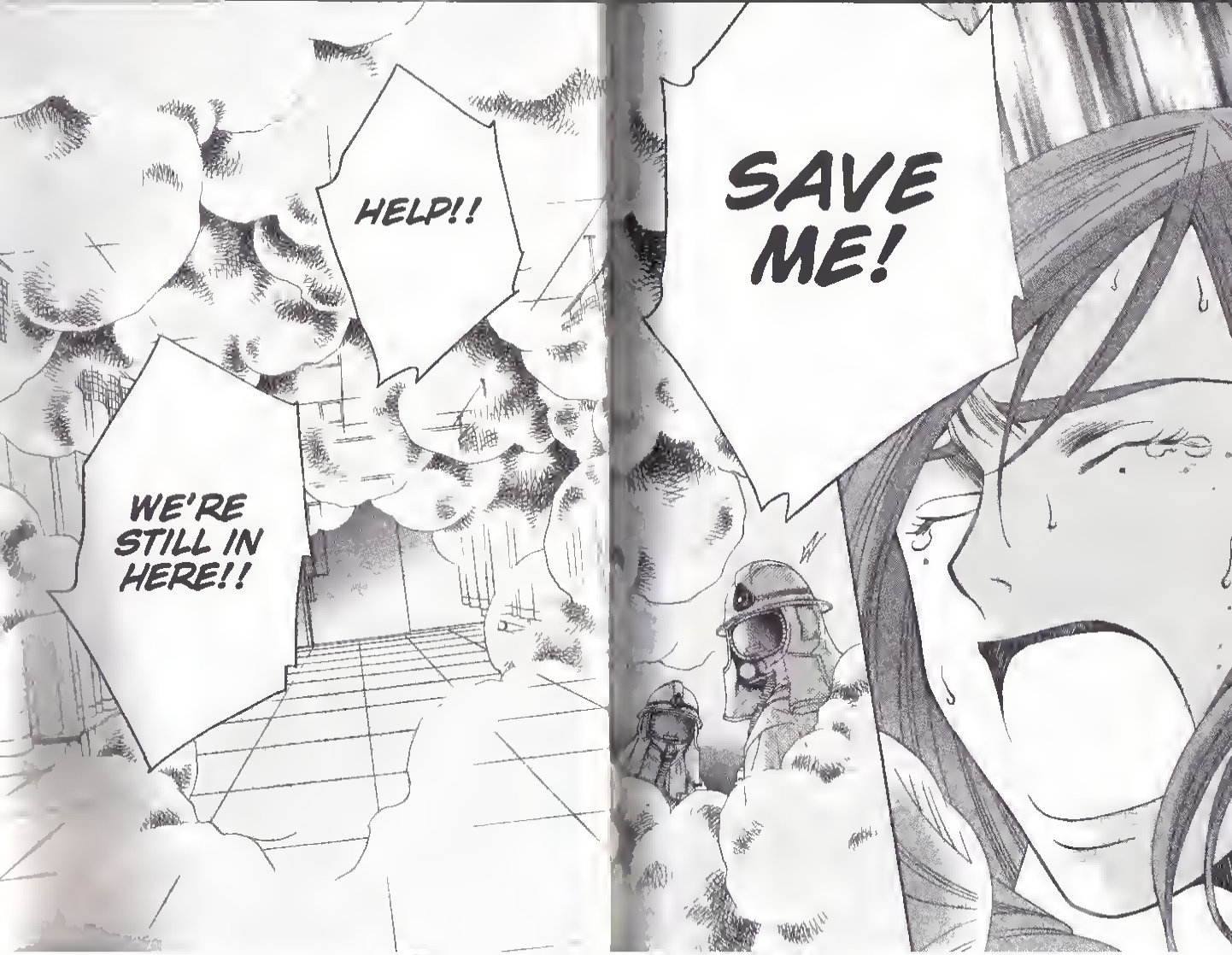

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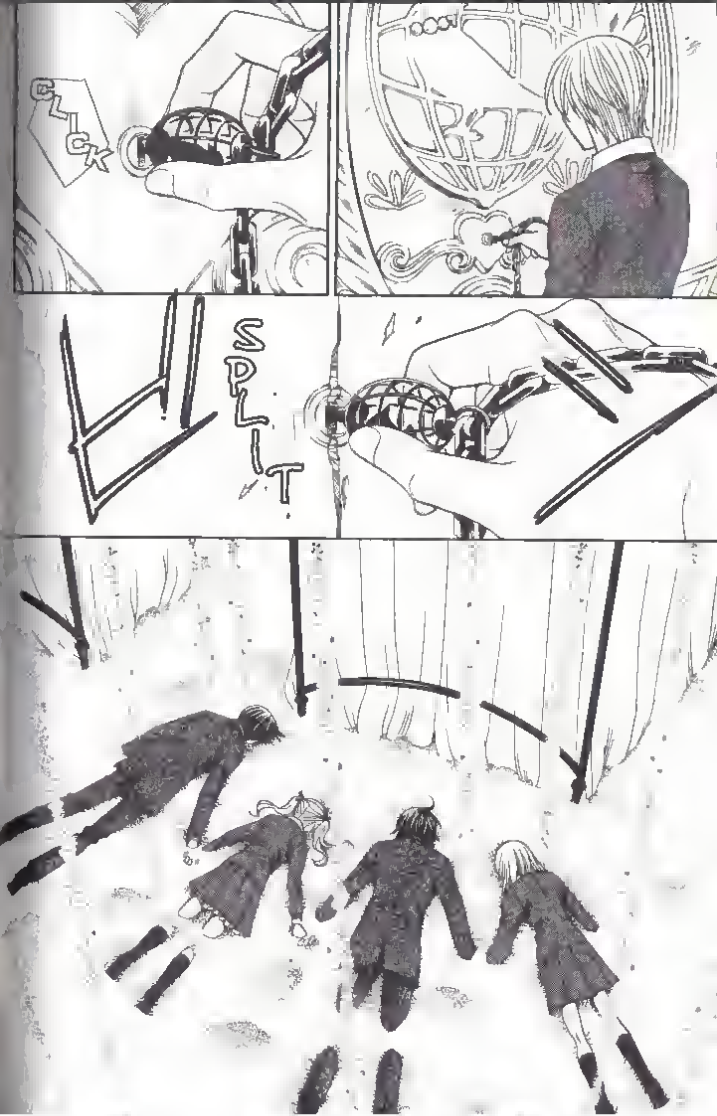

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AM I GOING TO THE MOON?

THE BLACK MOON.

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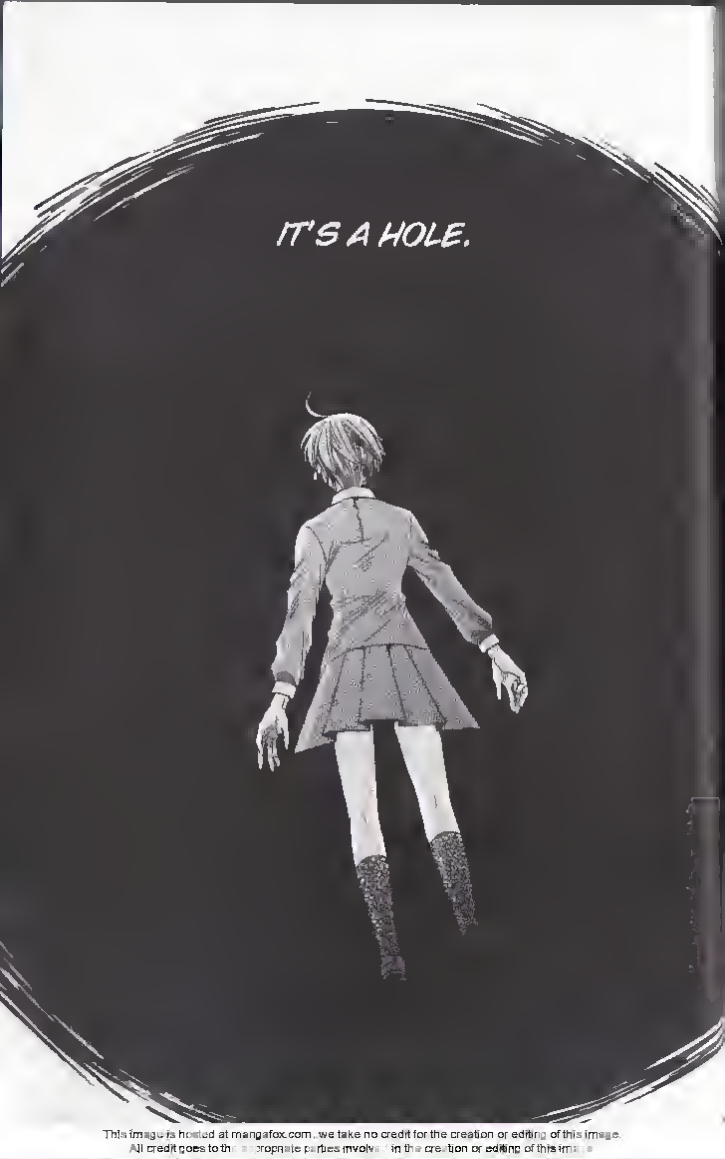

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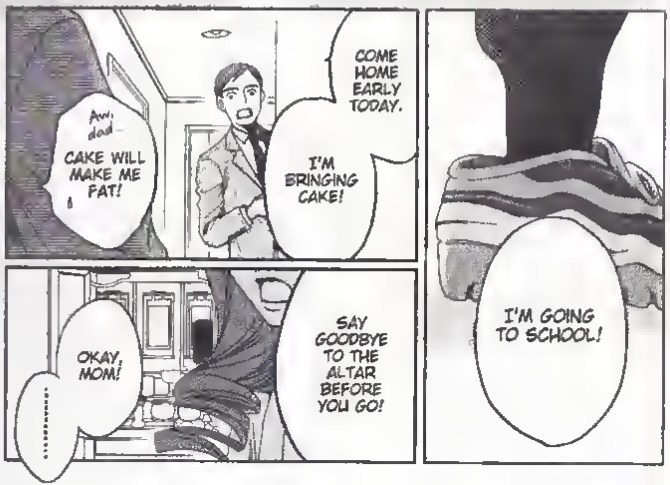
COME HOME EARLY TODAY.
I'M BRINGING CAKE!
Aw, dad...
CAKE WILL MAKE ME FAT!
SAY GOODBYE TO THE ALTAR BEFORE YOU GO!
OKAY, MOM!
I'M GOING TO SCHOOL!

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THE DAY I WAS BORN IS THE SAME DAY MY TWIN BROTHER DIED.
NO MATTER HOW MANY BIRTHDAYS I HAVE, I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW TO FEEL.
ASSUMING THERE IS SUCH A PLACE AS HEAVEN...
...THEN I GUESS HE'S MY LITTLE BROTHER UP THERE.

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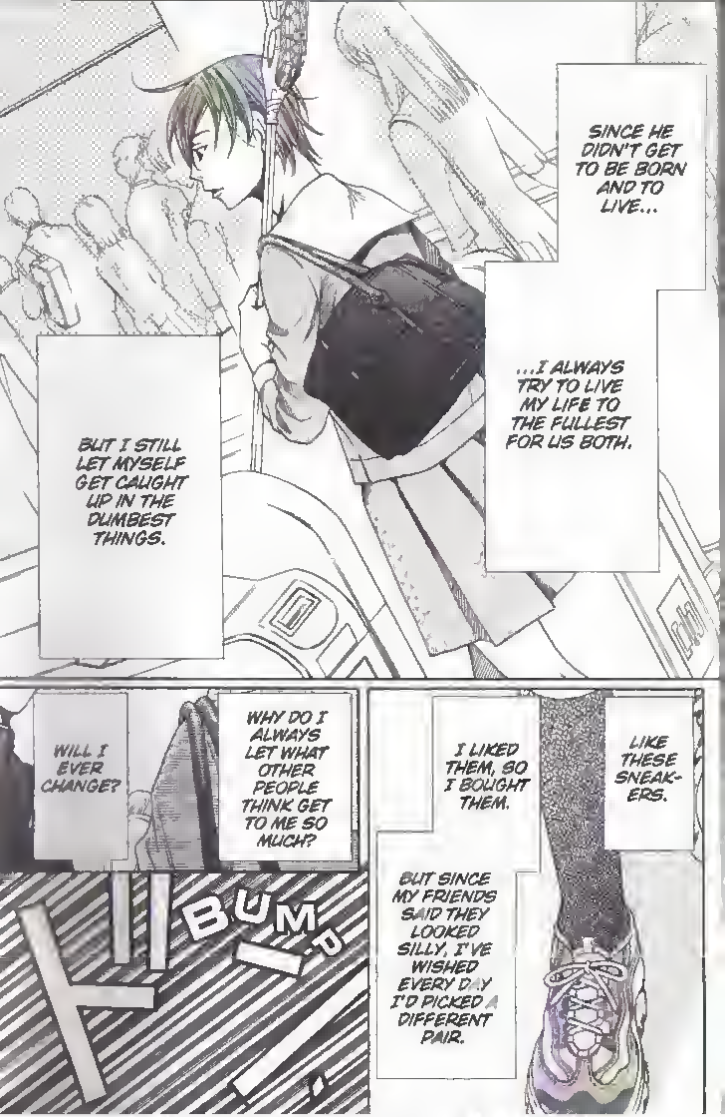
SINCE HE DIDN'T GET TO BE BORN AND TO LIVE...
...I ALWAYS TRY TO LIVE MY LIFE TO THE FULLEST FOR US BOTH.
BUT I STILL LET MYSELF GET CAUGHT UP IN THE DUMBEST THINGS.
WILL I EVER CHANGE?
WHY DO I ALWAYS LET WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK GET TO ME SO MUCH?
BUM...
I LIKED THEM, SO I BOUGHT THEM.
BUT SINCE MY FRIENDS SAID THEY LOOKED SILLY, I'VE WISHED EVERY DAY I'D PICKED A DIFFERENT PAIR.
LIKE THESE SNEAKERS.

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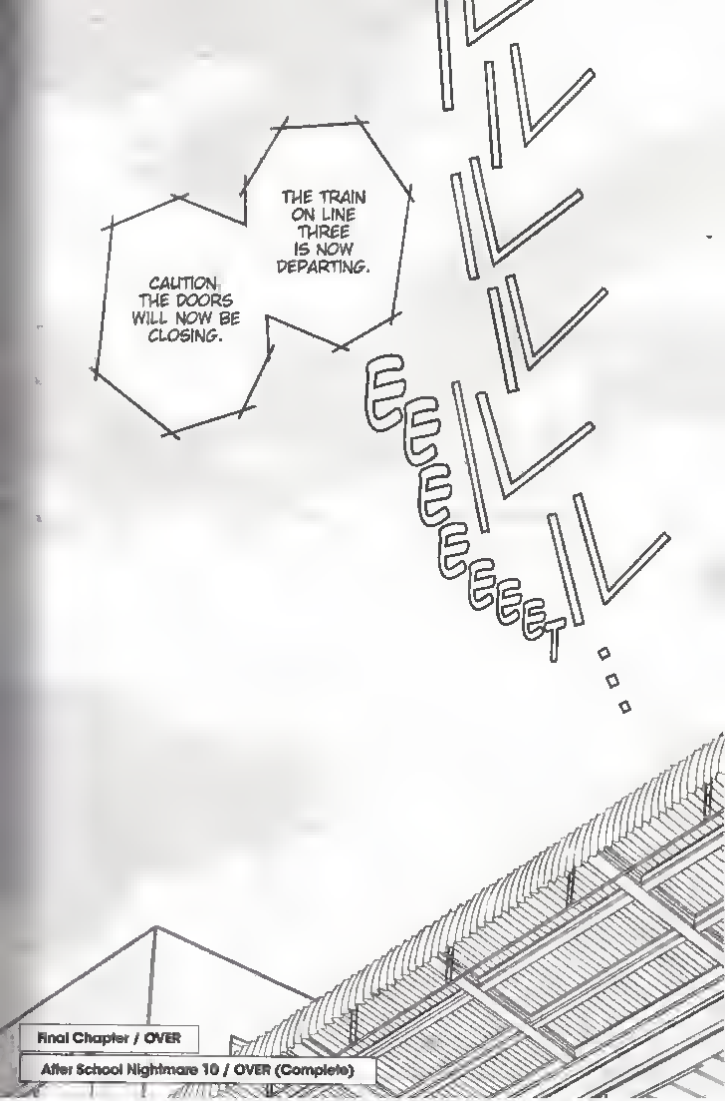

Final Chapter / OVER

After School Nightmare 10 / OVER (Complete)

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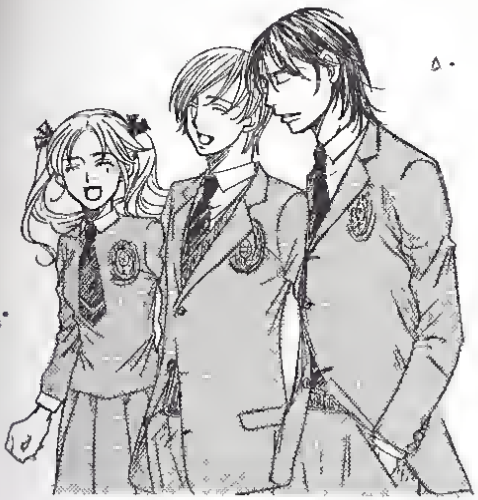
YOU CAN SEE "SETONA MIZUSHIRO'S OFFICIAL HOMEPAGE" VIA CELL PHONE TOO
HTTP://WWW.PAGE.SANNET.NE.JP/SETONA



Thank you very much for reading to the very end!

Thank you to all the school staff who gave me wonderful shots of their campus settings for reference. And to all the busy gynecologist assistants who checked over my representations of the clinic. And to the bookstore staff who helped man the signings and manga events I attended. To all my assistants who helped me so much. To everybody at the publishing house. There are so many of you I have to give thanks to.

And last but not least, thank you to all you readers out there I really am grateful to you all!

Mizushiro

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KAGOME, KAGOME, THE BIRD IN THE CAGE...

By Christine Schilling

Warning! Spoilers Ahead!
Do Not Read Until You've Finished the Manga!

By now you have probably noticed the persistent imagery of caged birds that runs throughout *After School Nightmare*. This image is quite deliberate – and provides a vital clue to Mashiro's situation. Just as we might say that a woman who is expecting has "a bun in the oven," the Japanese use the phrase "a bird in the cage" as an endearing euphemism for pregnancy. Thus the image of a bird in a cage, from the school's emblem to the crows that burst free of Mashiro in the dream world, is symbolic of Mashiro's true nature.

This image is also a reference to a popular Japanese children's game called "Kagome, Kagome" – which provides another clue to the story. The game is a variation on the well-known game of "It." Whoever is chosen to be It stands blindfolded in the middle of a ring of children as they chant a song and circle around. When the song comes to an end, the children stop, and the person in the middle must guess who's standing behind him. If he guesses correctly, the two children switch places and the game resumes. The lyrics to the song are:

Kagome, Kagome, the bird in the cage,
When will you come out?
In the night just before the dawn,
The crane and turtle slipped.
Who stands behind you now?

These seemingly innocent lyrics contain a surprisingly dark meaning. If the bird in the cage is a child in the womb, then when the crane and turtle—symbols of longevity—"slip," it symbolizes a miscarriage or stillbirth.

And so a simple children's game serves as subtle foreshadowing to the inevitable revelation that Mashiro's male form is doomed to suffer a "slip" and die at birth.

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SETONA MIZUSHIRO

At last, it's the final volume

I hope everybody can enjoy the story, with all of its twists and developments, up to the very last page in this miniature garden that is "After School Nightmare"

I feel blessed to have been able to read people's impressions of this manga, and feel the wishes that they all felt in their hearts, through each of their unique experiences with the book I feel like I was granted a whole new original story just through hearing from all of you

I'll admit, this manga is strange and quirky, but I wrote it with the intention of making it a true shoja manga, a true high school story and a true piece of entertainment Up to the very last page, I sought to create a straight and upstanding manga, like I was throwing a fastball

I hope the story reaches all of you, fast and straight, and I have kept that hope within me up to the very end.

ABOUT THE MANGA-KA

Setona Mizushiro's first real dabble in the world of creating manga was in 1985 when she participated in the publication of a dojinshi (amateur manga) She remained active in the dojinshi world until she debuted in April of 1993 with her short single *Fuyu ga Owarou Toshiteita* (Winter Was Ending) that ran in Shogakukan's *Puchi Comic* magazine Mizushiro-sensei's latest work is *Black Rose Alice*, a vampire series still currently running in Japan Besides manga, Mizushiro-sensei has an affinity for chocolate, her two cats (Jam and Nene), and round sparkly objects

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